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IMPERIAL PARIS;

INCLUDING

NEW SCENES FOR OLD VISITORS

BY

W. BLANCHARD JERROLD.

2

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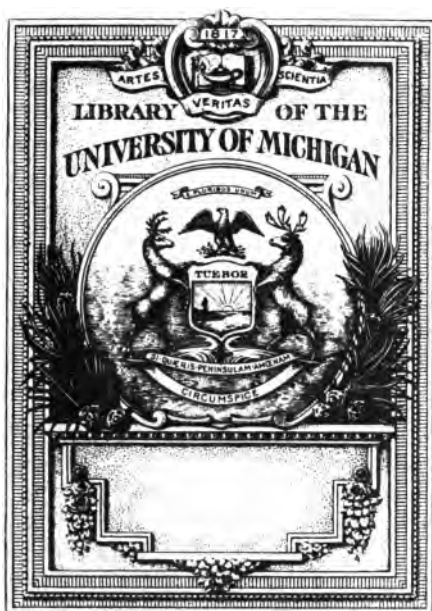
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PREFACE.

SOME of the papers contained in this book have already appeared in "Household Words;" but there are many which are now published for the first time. Two or three of these original chapters, form part of a work I had once projected, on the Poor of Paris, but which other avocations compelled me to abandon. They may, however, stimulate some inquirer who has the leisure to finish a task that could not fail to interest the English public. Chiffons and Chiffoniers; the Four Seasons in Prose; the French Waiter's Story; Departed this Life in Paris; Street-Notes; and Paris under the Bees, are original chapters, in which the reader will find, if I am not mistaken, views of Parisian activity with which no book has yet made him acquainted. In the paper entitled "The English Painted by the French," I have woven into one narrative, a series of quotations from various French writers, who have written recently on England. It presents, at a glance, a series of whimsical



THE GIFT OF

John D. ...

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IMPERIAL PARIS;

INCLUDING

NEW SCENES FOR OLD VISITORS.

CHAPTER I.

PARIS UNDER THE BEES.

PARIS UNDER THE BEES presents to the eye of the old visitor many changes—many new features. Some of them are sombre enough ; but, happily, they are generally bright with promise. The working population have suffered terribly, and the trade in Paris articles is slack ; but there still appears to be a general energy pervading the populace, which is attributable to new ideas ; to a steady government ; and a growing respect for labour. The Parisian is essentially cheerful, and the fêtes at the Barrières almost tempt the casual observer to deny point-blank that misery reigns in any quarter of the capital. Yet it is indisputable that a war, which has agitated markets dealing in absolute necessities, has nearly paralysed that dealing in objects of taste and luxury. You may do without the ormolu clock, or the Sèvres china

—you may even deny yourself the coveted bonbonnière; but you cannot wholly avoid the *Marché des Innocents*—you cannot turn your back upon the baker. And thus Paris has probably suffered from the war more than any other capital, precisely because its working population are the best artists in the world. People may, for a time, do without art, but the daily visit must be paid to the butcher.

Of this Parisian art, which furnishes the boudoirs of the world,—which adorns two-thirds of the drawing-room mantelpieces of Europe,—much has been written. It has been called low art, it has been lauded as perfect art. It is undoubtedly popular art—art as it is understood by tens of thousands; and for this reason it is probably low art. Parisian art deals in bright colours, in decided blues and greens, rather than with the delicate shades and happy combination of tints. It aims at perfect imitations and at sentiment in design; it loves china Cupids, and Watteau's ladies in every kind of sentimental and amorous attitude. It leans to the grotesque often, and is not restrained in this leaning by any stiff "puritanic stays." It perches ormolu clocks upon the backs of kissing lovers; it furnishes chocolate moulds representing military prowess, and deposits little sugar and sponge-cake Napoleons in every confiseur's shop-window. It is conspicuous in sign-boards. Painted vines creep over the wine-shop windows; drinking parties sitting upon empty barrels, shine from the door-panels; the charcoal merchant's shed is covered with a design representing a heavy stack of wood; the chiropodist has an oil-painting

under his porte-cochère, in which the operation for which he is celebrated is most painfully represented; the artists who live by plucking gray hair from the heads of people of "a certain age," have carefully elaborated pictures of themselves in the act of searching for the silver of forty-five; and really the connoisseur in Parisian babies may study them in the arms of their first nurses, under considerable advantages. In every street the visitor may find paintings, in which a fashionably dressed lady is represented, holding a baby in her arms; the background generally discovering a bed containing the mother of the infant. The fashionable lady is, of course, the portrait of the owner of the painting, who is anxious to make it known to all whom it may concern that she is a sworn midwife!

The shoe-blacks of the Pont Neuf, who add to the business of boot-polishing the artistic operation of clipping poodles in every variety of fantastic pattern, enrich their wooden footstools with designs which exhibit the Paris poodle, trimmed in various complicated fashions,—cut to the quick, except at the joints of his legs and the point of his tail, or only half shorn. The tradesmen who deal in all kinds of medical bands, have handsome paintings of their goods upon their shop fronts. Very dashing gentlemen may be seen, surrounded by a select crowd of admirers, painting the house fronts of little wine-dealers. Lately I saw a very important looking personage, calmly sitting at his work at the corner of a street upon the Quai Voltaire. He had his attendant with him, to grind his colours, and fill in the coarser parts of the painting upon the wall. The

subject was a full-length portrait of Voltaire, and the treatment was not inferior to that which has won place in many important art-exhibitions. The visitor, on his way from the Tuileries to the Institute, cannot fail to notice this sign, on his left ; it is worth attention, as illustrative of the care with which Parisian tradesmen call art in aid of the prosperity of their establishments. While on the subject of Parisian signs, I will notice one which was to be seen, in the spring, at the door of the Hôtel des Américains, in the Rue St. Honoré. The enterprising hotel-keeper evidently intended a compliment to his customers ; but I believe it is not on record that he won the thanks which his good intention deserved. Upon the two door-posts were painted full-length portraits of negroes !

The establishments, however, which indulge in the most important pictorial advertisements, are the Paris carriers who move household furniture. Their establishments are easily recognised by immense oil descriptions of the waggons and horses employed in the business. The boldness and accuracy with which these immense signs are painted, are really remarkable, and are indisputably peculiar to Paris. And yet little high art dwells within Louis Philippe's fortifications. The French have taste and sentiment ; but they seldom grasp the severer forms, they rarely reach the higher realms, of art. Clever as draughtsmen, striking, to the vulgar eye, as colourists, they produce popular pictures ; that is, pictures, every passage of which may be read by the fleetest runner ; but all that is tender, all that is imaginative, all that is solemn, is beyond them. Again in landscape they have scarcely one great name ; Rosa

Bonheur, whose fine work is the most conspicuous ornament of the Luxembourg gallery, stands almost alone there, to represent the rustic in France. They have imitators of Claude, as they have imitators of every past school ; but they do not appear to have produced a thoroughly original view of nature, with all their study. Their trees are as artificial as their flowers, yet they believe that they lead as proper generals in all the realms of art. They tell you that the greatness of ancient Greece and Rome—the glories of Raphael—have passed the Alps to find a fitting resting-place in Paris ; and that while France may win from England, by the new alliance, many useful inventions, many practical theories of commerce, England will gain from France the glories of her magnificent arts. We are not allowed to know how to mix the commonest colours ; our exhibitions are only feeble imitations of the exhibitions of Paris.

Every French traveller who journeys to London appears to carry back to his fellow-citizens a confirmation of this prevalent idea. Thus M. Jules Lecomte, who recently honoured the English capital with a visit, returned to Paris and wrote “*Un Voyage de Désagrémens à Londres.*” This little volume of ingenious misrepresentations is before me ; and it is really a remarkable proof of the immense number of errors that can be crammed into a small space. We are favoured with the London legend of “*Wattington* ;” the people of Paris are assured that the wonder of cockneys is so intense, when the sun shines, that they go abroad, on these rare occasions, saying to one another “*It is fine weather, sir ;*” and

that the great word, heard above all others in the streets of the English metropolis is "Box!" And then, at the close of his work, M. Lecomte sums up his opinions in these words:—"I have never denied this country its political greatness, its industrial power, its financial strength, and its rare nationality; but I proclaim it sterile in all that is intellectual, elegant, and artistic, and hold that it is made up of iron and coal." In proof of this assertion, the author declares that the English escape from their country at every opportunity, to enjoy the sweetness of existence abroad. The narrowness of this view, its obvious error, and its impertinence when written in a language that is adorned by no epic, to disparage a nation richer than any other on the face of the globe in its books, will give the reader some idea of the verdicts which travelling Frenchmen have spread about Paris to our disadvantage: of these I have treated, however, in a separate chapter. But M. Lecomte, when he approaches art, becomes ludicrous. He describes a visit to the Royal Academy, only to tell his countrymen about "Sir Colicot" who calls to mind Cuyp; Webster, who is the worthy rival of Charlet; and Frost, who will succeed in introducing into England the school of Albano and Diaz! Thus any little signs of artistic genius which a searching spirit like that of M. Lecomte may discover among us, can be referred only to one wish, to imitate something French! We are barbarians, to be raised from our vulgar debasement by the surpassing excellencies of French artists and French authors. Poetry is to arrive in London, presently, from Paris direct. This is the Parisian

view of the consequences of our *entente excessivement cordiale*. Now, the question viewed from Fleet Street, instead of the Boulevards, assumes a very different aspect.

The Englishman knows that France may derive solid advantages from an intimacy with the British nation. A new and healthier tone may be given, in the first place, to Parisian journalism. Let any candid man compare the *Times* with the *Constitutionnel*; or the *Daily News* with the *Siècle*; and ask himself whether, in one essential of journalism, the French papers can compare with their English rivals. The news of the *Siècle* is generally contained in about one column and a half of *Nouvelles Officielles* and *Nouvelles Diverses*; all the remaining space is filled with wordy articles, in none of which the core of a question is approached; paid puffs, known to the Parisian journalist as *réclames*; theatrical notices, written in the most fulsome style of flattery (the critic, it is said, being sometimes hired to exhibit literary ecstasies), and feuilletons of dramatic force. The reply of the journalist to any complaint in reference to his organ, is, that the mouth of the periodical writer is gagged; the answer to this explanation is,—when your mouth was not gagged, it uttered no political wisdom, it founded no sound journalism. An English daily paper enjoys sources of knowledge as extensive as the English government; it has experienced correspondents in every quarter of the globe; it has writers less given to phrase-making than to conscientious criticism; it is able to record the political and industrial progresses of the world faithfully, and to base its opinions upon a broad

foundation of facts. It fulfils all the requisites of a newspaper, since its columns and its vast machinery are mainly devoted to the publication and collection of news. It uses every line of telegraph in the world. It chartered steamers to convey its despatches. Its commissioners follow every important movement ; its correspondents may be found in every spot where there is human interest, from the snows of Stockholm to the golden quartz rocks of Australia. Whereas a French newspaper is made up of puffs, love stories, quotations from the *Moniteur*, and a few paragraphs of accidents and offences, all told in a style so bombastic and inflated that the reader hardly knows where the facts end and the colouring begins. There are occasional graces of diction, and ingenuities of word-spinning which give a piquancy to its columns ; but, regarded as a chronicle of the operations of the world, it is a barbarism. It is encompassed by influences, which lower its tone and paralyse its influence. Its criticism is too often ticketted, like a silk dress in a haberdasher's shop-window. A friend of mine was lately offered a criticism on his book, by one of the conspicuous Parisian critics, for two hundred francs. The *Siècle* of this morning lies before me, it contains a puff of a quack, who professes to have derived an extraordinary knowledge of medicine from the Chinese and Indians, and, as the result of this knowledge, advertises a method for the cure of obesity. But every day may be seen in this journal, as in others, a series of obviously purchased puffs.

I recollect being one day in the bureau of a new journal that was on the point of appearing, when a certain

learned Abbé was introduced into the editor's room. The venerable ecclesiastic enjoyed an extensive reputation as a scientific man. His learned *feuilletons* were coveted by the directors of the French press. He was asked to state the conditions on which he would contribute to the new undertaking. His reply was that he should require a certain sum per line, and the right to his *réclames*. In other words the Abbé stipulated for the power of inserting scientific puffs of patent medicines, new inventions, pomatums, &c., and of pocketing the sums he might be able to extort from the inventors or shopkeepers. I enquired into the Abbé's system of proceeding, and it appeared that he sent round to shopkeepers and offered to introduce their novelties to the public, with strong praise, at a fixed price. Fie! Monsieur l'Abbé—editor of a scientific periodical. Even the gentlemen who had been calculating the sum the *réclames* of this new journal would produce in the course of the year, were shocked at the idea of a *rédacteur* so distinguished meddling with the baser parts of the undertaking. It was their business as commercial men to sell puffs; but that he should hawk his name and accomplishments from shop to shop appeared infamous.

Thus, it is sincerely to be hoped that, in journalism, we shall learn nothing from the French.

Nor can our neighbours aspire to teach us any new scientific truths. No living Frenchman has added to the store of knowledge, facts at once so important and numerous as those with which Faraday has enriched the world. But, here again, we may note that ingenuity which almost amounts to genius, and which is

a Gallic characteristic entirely. In all scientific studies which require delicate manipulation—nice adjustment—their skill is pre-eminent. Tested by their discoveries, French scientific men cannot rank high; but, estimated as ingenious students, they are beyond all praise. The French, again, are fine makers of optical instruments; they have also a great reputation as builders of models of machinery; but directly a machine is required for work, their skill must yield place to the Englishman or the Belgian. Again, they are exquisite photographers, and in this art all those qualities which distinguish a Frenchman are needed. The fine manipulation,—the nice taste in the selection of details,—the enthusiasm in favour of the process for its intrinsic beauty,—all these qualities are present, and favour the French photographic student's advancement. One of the most eminent photographers of Paris discriminated truly between his countrymen and the English in this matter. He said that in London photography had been pursued for the sole purpose of making money; whereas, in Paris, there were photographers who pursued the art because they loved it; of these enthusiasts my informant was an apt example. He had spent forty or fifty thousand francs in experiments. He had expended all the money he had obtained from government contracts in the pursuit of improvements, and had succeeded, when I looked over his portfolio, in producing landscapes, the delicate half-shades of which recalled Turner. They were splendid light and shade reflections of the exquisite landscapes of Brittany. As he walked with me through his atelier, he proudly showed me

the colossal baths and other apparatus with which he produced his photographs of the Louvre and other public places. He was generally up in the morning at half-past five o'clock, and at six was prepared for his first negative. His photographs fetched high prices, were valued by the French government, and were bought by Prince Albert ; yet he seemed pleased at his success only because it gave him the means to pursue his studies, and approach still nearer to perfection in his darling process. And he was right in distinguishing the French photographer from the English photographer,—attributing high motives to the one and mercenary motives to the other.

At this point, I may briefly refer to the artistic activity with which French artists were seized, in view of the Universal Art-Exhibition of this year. I begin with an anecdote :—

M. Edmond F——, an artist living at Maisons-Lafitte (Seine-et-Oise), was in quest of a model for the figure of Innocence, which he intended to exhibit in the Universal Exhibition. A few months ago he chanced to meet, on the Paris road, a young country girl, who was sitting upon the trunk of a tree crying. Touched by her sadness, he spoke to her. She told him that her name was Pierrette D——, that she was an orphan, and that her aunt had just turned her out of doors because she had knocked down a clock. As she spoke the young artist discovered in her face those features which he required for his figure. Her dress was coarse ; but her head had that rare grace for which the true artist searches. After a long discussion, he persuaded her

to accompany him to Maisons-Lafitte, to sit to him. After the first sitting, he was so delighted with his model, that he had decent clothes made for her, lodged her in a comfortable apartment, and took care that she should have every necessity supplied to her. The artist, moreover, took great precautions to protect his model of Innocence from profane eyes, and for this purpose confided her to the care of a trustworthy duenna.

Being suddenly called to Paris by important business, he discovered, on his return, that he had been robbed. His jewellery and valuables, together with money, had been carried off. He soon discovered the sad fact that Pierrette D—— was the thief, and that she had left Maisons in the company of a man with whom she was on terms of intimacy. On the following day she was discovered sitting upon one of the stone benches near the Arc de Triomphe; and on being taken into custody made a full confession of her guilt. As for the picture of Innocence, it waits, I believe, for a model.

But M. Edmond F——'s disaster has not turned his brother artists from their great enterprises.

The reader may remember that the 15th of March was appointed as the day on which contributions to the Universal Exhibition would be received. I was at the doors to see the rush of artists and sculptors. The scene well repaid a long walk. How excitedly, poor fellows, had the young men devoted to the arts been at work during the last three or four months! How many of them had found it a hard matter to scrape together the money value of a gilt frame! And here,

where the mania for the colossal in painting prevails, the frame forms no inconsiderable item of the artist's expenditure.

Well, on the last day the artists are wending their way by hundreds to the back of the Universal Art Galleries. It is a sad sight, seen even by the most hopeful spectator; since three out of every four of these pictures are destined to be turned out of the doors through which their producers are now eagerly hurrying them. Three out of every four of these impetuous fellows are destined to fetch their rejected works away from this universal tournament of Art.

If the reader will, in imagination, take up his post in the rear of the long white building erected to receive the paintings of all nations, I will endeavour to give him a few facts that may increase his anticipation of the splendours of the interior. Here are a few of the French contributions:—Eugène Delacroix three pictures; Philippe Rousseau, four large landscapes. Then follow, as contributors to the universal gathering, Troyon, Diaz, Corot, Meissonnier, Français, Gleyre, Barye, Cavelier, Gerôme, Hamon (three pictures), Ricard (seven portraits): acres of Horace Vernet from Versailles—nearly all the pictures from the Luxembourg! Among the remarkable contributions, a colossal figure of Sorrow, from the hand of M. Christophe, passes on its way into the galleries. Landscapes from Holland and Belgium follow, together with numerous contributions from Germany. Among these, the visitor will remark a bale of seventy pictures; they are the production of Cornelius. We have noticed the very prominent

men of the French school; but what if we touch that remarkable illustrator of Rabelais, Gustave Doré, on the elbow—and inquire about his contributions? They include a series of twelve marvellous illustrations illustrating the fable of the Wandering Jew: they are said to be the most remarkable specimens of artistic nightmare on record. The same artist sends a great Battle of Alma and a Murder of Rizzio to the general gathering.

The back of the building resembles very closely the front of a third-class French custom-house; and the officials crowding about the door help to complete the resemblance. Of course the scene is exciting. All kinds of conveyances are grouped in picturesque confusion about the entrances. Enormous canvases are being borne triumphantly in upon the shoulders of several men; others are arriving upon litters; others again, in cabs; while ladies of various ages may be seen making their way to the crowded entrance with their little productions under their cloaks. The artists who have delivered their productions are collected about in groups, smoking and discussing the prospects of the general contest. One remarks to me that while the really business-like oil painters follow their works carried upon hand barrows, he has observed that the pastels always came in carriages. Men are flying about with large square bits of paper, which they seem to wish to fill up. They grow terribly excited if this wish cannot be instantly fulfilled. Workmen, with ribbons about their caps, who evidently exercise a little authority over their associates, vehemently superintend the

removal of contributions from the waggons or barrows, or carriages, as they draw up. The directors flit hither and thither in a great state of excitement. Then, at a separate entrance, huge masses of sculpture are being rolled into the open hall appropriated for them—some having got a little damaged by the way. There is a David in the act of using his sling, for instance. He has suffered severely in the torso, and is propped up under the arm with a prop that looks like a crutch. Among the remarkable works of sculpture of the French school, a great lion by Jacquemart is rolled forward; past a group which represents England, France, and Turkey together, sword in hand. The Grief, by Christophe, to which I have already alluded, is much talked about. It appears that the author has been at work about this figure for four years, and that he has monopolised a favourite model throughout this period. The head is buried in the hands. Artists chattering near the entrance declare that this attitude was chosen because the face of the model was by no means pleasing.

The gossip about the pictures, as they reached their destination, was not uninteresting. I heard that Couverchel had contributed a Council of War at Varna, containing portraits of the members; and that a third representation of the Battle of the Alma had been sent by Eugene Lami; and even a fourth by a Wallachian artist named Annan, whose Battle of Oltenitza, exhibited a little while ago in a print shop on the Boulevards, attracted crowds of people. This picture was presented to the Sultan. Then

there was a little pleasantry afloat about two sets of the Seven Cardinal Sins, all represented by female figures. One of these sets is by Dubufe, sen., and the other by Duveaux. Dubufe may be remembered as an artist who has enjoyed considerable reputation as a portrait painter. He forwards, in addition to his Sins, portraits of his two children. I may remark, by the way, that there is a Dubufe, jun., who enjoys also a high reputation. Vauchelet's contribution is a pictorial description of Saint Louis under the Oak of Vincennes. Rosa Bonheur has sent a specimen of her charming pencil, representing a group of winnowers. Salymann offers a good landscape describing the environs of Nepi; and Bougereau, the grand prize man (who has just returned from Rome, and whose prize picture of a Burial in the Catacombs will doubtless be also exhibited), a Holy Family. But the picture which Giraud contributes is certainly destined to be very prominent—especially in *Le Mousquetaire*; the subject is M. Alexandre Dumas, and his son, attendants, &c., travelling upon mules in Spain. Picou's subject, Love put up to Auction, makes a remarkable composition. An old man holds the rosy boy aloft; women laugh about him; and elderly gentlemen, who, according to modern principles, "should know better," bid for him. There is, at all events, a pleasing audacity in the idea. To this list it might be tedious to add the formidable array of Napoleons. Here is an old model gossiping about in the crowd, who has been engaged for a long time past sitting for the hero of Austerlitz, and is probably very proud of it. He seems to have left a picture for which he had sat at

one of the doors on behalf of one of his masters. The classic head of the Emperor will always ensure for his memory an immortality in art; and his great history is in every passage—from Toulon to St. Helena—essentially pictorial. Muller sends an immense picture devoted to the glorification of the old Imperial Guard—a picture said to be full of life. Then there is Clesinger's colossal statue of François I., destined to replace the late duke of Orleans in the quadrangle of the Louvre. This equestrian group does not represent Francis as the warrior, but as the friend of art, the companion of Benvenuto Cellini and the great artists of the Renaissance. It is to be cast in bronze.

Of Ingres, with his unlimited space, Vernet with his interminable battles, I am not inclined to say much. I am inclined rather to enforce once more the point I have elsewhere endeavoured to establish, in reference to the extraordinary comprehensive Exclusion Bill carried by the French Art Committee against the young men of this capital. Probably no words of comfort I might pronounce would ever reach the ears of these disappointed young fellows who have been rejected; probably, moreover, the elasticity of their youth will provide the best comfort. But the clenched hands that were raised from far off ateliers in the unfrequented quarters, when the refusals were spread throughout this capital, should make the proud masters who have grasped whole chambers to themselves, where they might nurse their wretched vanity of leaders, think seriously once more over that hostility to youthful aspirants which is the worst feature of modern success. Rather than see Ingres occupying

his solitary chamber full of his own productions, I would be glad to meet him side by side with the young men whom he might choose to help through the struggling days of studentship. Had he exhibited one picture—his best—and given his remaining walls to the untried professors of his art, struggling through the mists of untold sorrows to the temple wherein he already stands upon the altar steps—he would have gathered the leaves of a nobler laurel than that he will be able to take to himself—even with the wide range of space, that, like a miser, he has hoarded to his own profit. I am aware that to protest in these words, is to take side with the weak against the strong, to fall across the way where victorious chariots override the loiterer and the cynic: but to vindicate the cause of the young in the teeth of established power, is to make good a claim upon public gratitude in the future. Twenty years will play their game even in a royal academy; young men whose beardless faces are now the only evidence against their claims for power will get beards; the ferrule of the tyrannical master must fall when his hand becomes weak and fleshless. And thus may the young men leave their cause to time, when established vanity wrongs them in the present. Let there be an universal exhibition twenty years hence, and many of the young fellows who have fallen under the penalties of the present Exclusion Bill will be rulers in the galleries. May they learn one lesson from the present disappointment, viz., a tenderness towards the aspirants who may depend upon their favour.

But in the Fine Art display, completed for the

Exhibition visitors, I should not fail to notice the street improvements, the completion of the Louvre, the long line of the Rue de Rivoli, etc. These improvements have become a perfect mania. Boulevards are to be driven through every corner of the capital. In ten years, if all the projected works be carried out, Paris will be a city of Boulevards. Already the quays have been enlarged and levelled; in three years a way has been perfected from the Rue de l'Echelle to the Place du Marché St. Jean. Two boulevards have been cut, viz., the Boulevard de Strasbourg, from the railway station de l'Est to the Boulevard St. Denis, and the Boulevard Mazas, near the Lyons Railway station. Again, the Rue de Rivoli is to be prolonged still further—to the church of St. Louis and St. Paul. To all these improvements should be added the three important boulevards or broad roads which have been recently determined upon, viz., the Boulevard Malesherbes, the Boulevard du Centre (which is, in reality, only a continuation of the Boulevard de Strasbourg), and the Boulevard de l'Hôtel de Ville, which is to connect the place of this name, by a straight line parallel with the Seine, with the Place du Châtelet. The Boulevard Malesherbes is an old project, first put forth in the year 1808. Then, this boulevard was to start from the Madeleine and go in a direct line to the Barrière de Monceau; but the property through which such a line would pass has become too valuable to be sacrificed. The present line will cross the Rue la Ville l'Eveque, the Rue de la Madeleine, the Rue d'Anjou, the Rue de Lavoisier, and having taken the line of the Rue

Bumford, will stop at the Rue de la Pépinière. It will then bend to the left of the barracks, will pass the Rue d'Astorg, the Rue de Laborde, the Rue de la Bienfaisance, the Rue de Lisbonne, the Rue de Miroménil, the Rue de Hambourg, and the Rue de la Cisalpine, towards the extremity of the Parc de Monceau. Near the Madeleine the boulevard will be thirty-four metres in width. The total expense anticipated for the completion of this boulevard is twelve millions of francs. The Boulevard du Centre will cause the demolition of nearly 300 houses, and will cost thirty millions. From this sum the amounts realised by re-selling the ground bought, will have to be deducted. In addition to these boulevards there are the three wide streets which have been recently determined upon. The first of these is to the right of the Rue Réaumur, with a place before the church of St. Nicholas des Champs; the second is between the Rue du Grand and the Rue du Petit-Hurleur; and the third at the extremity of the Rue aux Ours. In these improvements are included the widening or suppression of many old and inconvenient streets. The boulevard which is to connect the Hôtel de Ville with the Place du Châtelet, will necessitate the demolition of 122 houses.

The improvements which have been undertaken on the left bank of the Seine are comparatively unimportant. Some few have been agreed upon in the Rue des Mathurins, in the Rues Lacepede, Mouffetard, and de la Contrescarpe, St. Marcel, and in the square of Ste Genevieve. Still the Rue du Four remains to be enlarged. During five years these projects of widening the narrow streets on

this side of the Seine have been discussed, and it appears that the improvements would not cost more than three millions of francs. The widening of the Rue St. André des Arts from the place to the Rue de l'Eperon is considered, however, most urgent, since many accidents happen in this narrow channel. This improvement would cost only 600,000 francs, but it would add very little to the beauty of Paris. In reviewing all these changes the observer cannot resist the thought that it would be well to consider questions of drainage and of public convenience a little more, even if these considerations were to delay the execution of a magnificent boulevard.

Still, visitors to the Universal Exhibition will find many new points for admiration in the works which are now making prodigious progress in this capital.

All these improvements give employment—but on what terms? Is the work had at the cost of taxes which press upon the entire population? This is a question which I will endeavour to lay clearly before the reader.

Living is cheap in Paris, undoubtedly, when it is compared with that of London; and I believe, after some observation, that there is much less absolute misery in the French capital than in the English capital. Yet, at the present moment, with wine and meat at double their ordinary price, with a comparatively dear loaf for everybody, with fuel at a terrible figure, matters look gloomy enough for the poor of Paris. People who will look reasonably at matters, however—who will attend to logic rather than to sentiment,

will not attribute the prevailing dearness to any errors of the imperial government. Whatever may be the policy of this government in press questions, in electoral details, undoubtedly, in respect to the working classes, its efforts have all tended to cheapen food, and to give employment. Now, in the remarks I have to offer, I neither venture to assail, nor seek to compliment, "the powers that be" in Paris. The questions that I wish to touch do not belong to the present reign; still I must assert, in justice, that the tendency of the present monarch has been to slacken the heavy fiscal burdens of his people. His enemies have not failed to cry aloud that these mercies were due to his fears rather than to his sympathies—that in giving food and work to his subjects, his sole object was to prevent them from laying hands upon his sceptre. All this is easily said, and is not easily refuted. There is a certain mixture of selfishness in most human acts; but this mixture does not always drown nobler aspirations, and we have no positive proof that the imperial self has crushed every better feeling. I am glad to believe that every man's tendency is towards good; and that although he may be led to commit errors which are dastardly, there is within him always some aspiration which is worthy—some impulse which is incontestably noble. The manner in which a man who has committed a single political blunder, is hounded ever afterwards, speaks neither for the charity nor for the wisdom of the pack at his heels. Surely it would be well for us all, if we could heartily strive to forget every injury we have suffered, when those injuries have been repaired by redeeming kindnesses. Surely

a ruler may be fairly treated who has redeemed a single error by a multitude of wise acts. Surely a government—be its constitution the most despotic in form—should be able to count upon a fair analysis of its acts, from all liberal, all truly liberal men. I make a preface of this import, that readers may not be led away from any facts I may have to state.

Thus, the deficient harvest of 1853, and the successive deficiencies of late years in the wine districts, are matters over which no government can exercise control. All that the executive can do, is to remove restrictions which limit the consumption and add to the price of the scarce articles. These precautions, it is just to remark, the imperial government has taken. The bakers' bank kept bread within the reach of the poor when corn was at famine prices; the octroi duty has been lowered upon wine, as the article has risen in value. Thus, to some extent, the government has advanced with the time. Let us be fair in our verdicts. These are facts which are to the credit of Louis Napoleon. We may estimate his motive in the most unfriendly sense, still the facts remain; and by these posterity—removed from the passions which influence the verdicts of the hour—will judge him. The four great hardships which, at the present moment, affect the working population of Paris are—dear lodgings, dear meat, dear wine, and dear fuel. I may interest English readers by considering how these important elements of popular comfort may be cheapened; and in doing this I may notice the efforts already made in the right direction. There is a bow-string about Paris.

The demolition of old streets has brought about a state of things which may be likened to that which disturbed London when the pestilent nests of St. Giles's were rooted out—only aggravated and extended. Whether the erection of *cités* will rapidly dispel the present unfortunate state of things; whether the building society system now being introduced into Paris will succeed, are matters of speculation; but this fact, at all events, should be recorded, viz., that with the view of encouraging builders to erect these *cités*, the government has offered to add, I believe, one third, by way of premium, to all sums invested for this purpose. Undoubtedly this offer will tempt many to build; for, if I understand it clearly, it will remove everything of a speculative character from their operations. Thus the bow-string about Paris in no way affects lodgings. But directly we approach the subject of meat, the effects of this bow-string become immediately visible.

There is round Paris one long, low wall, pierced by some seventy or eighty *barrières*, if I am not mistaken, which tends to strangle all who live within its circle. It tightens about the neck of every struggling citizen, bearing him to the earth. The lazy fellows who dip their hands into every old woman's basket as she passes within the bounds of the city; who jump into every omnibus and leer under the seats; who look on saucily while a whole waggon-load of household furniture is spread upon the pavement for their inspection—to be again packed before it can pass through those strong iron gates: these are the fellows who are employed by the worshipful municipal authorities of

Paris to tighten the bow-string about the Parisians. Imagine a low line of wall built about London, and the population filtered through seventy or eighty gates! Imagine my lord mayor and aldermen as representatives of the power to obtrude their bottle-noses into every basket which passed through these gates—laying a toll upon every pound of meat, every pint of beer—in short, upon all the necessities of Londoners. Imagine, in short, the coal-tax, against which we all very properly exclaim, extended to meat and beer, and you have a very faint idea of the municipal bow-string which encompasses Paris.

Wine has doubled its price; and the government has, as I have already stated, lowered the octroi dues hereupon—still, dues are paid upon it, and, therefore, the working man has a right to grumble.

Fuel is dear: it might be cheap, but, attempt to cheapen it, and the Auvergnats wood-sellers* are up in arms. The government have yielded to the impetuosity of these temporary citizens, and have laid a heavy tax upon coals. Indisputably, coals might be cheaper in Paris than in London, if coals were free, and from this cheapness thousands of poor Parisian families would derive substantial benefit. But no; the importations of free-trade coal would destroy the monopoly which the Auvergnats enjoy in their chanciers—thousands would be benefited indisputably, but hundreds would be temporarily inconvenienced. It is said to be the ambition of the imperial government to make Paris a port: the importation of

* The reader will find some interesting facts concerning these citizens in the chapter entitled "Street Notes."

cheap coal offers them their best opportunity. The collieries of the western coast of England would supply coal to the metropolis of Paris at the cheapest possible rate; and the western towns of England, as Bristol, Liverpool, &c., would take increased quantities of French manufactures in return.

Thus it may be seen that half the misery which afflicts Paris is due to the bow-string which the municipal authorities have tightened about it. If I am not mistaken, no less than fifty-four millions of francs were last year levied upon the food of the people of the French capital. In justification of this, it is said that these fifty-four millions have been expended in city improvements, and therefore in giving employment to the working population. To the labourer, the proceeding looks very like taking the money out of his left-hand pocket to place it in his right-hand pocket. The removal of the bow-string altogether is the object to be accomplished, and whispers have already been circulated to the effect that such an emancipation is included in the free-trade propositions of the imperial cabinet.

Meantime it is really and truly a curious point in the present aspect of Paris, that all classes appear to be enthusiastic about the war in the East. They talk of its glory in every restaurant; the workman believes in it as he eats his limited fare, and as he resolves to forego his regular visit to the Barrière ball. With us this enthusiasm prevails chiefly among Temple students and others—who have a supreme contempt for the last quotation, and would not stop the humming of a favourite air, if they were informed that the Bank of

England had raised the minimum rate of discount to eight per cent. In Paris, on the contrary, all people appear to be interested, not only in every political, or military, or naval movement, but also in every variation of the funds. Every boulevards loungeur buys the card of the *Cours de la Bourse*, which the hawkers cry from the Madeleine almost to the Place de la Bastille between three and four o'clock; and, according to the author of the *Cosaques de la Bourse*, waiters love to invest their *pour-boires* in little speculations, wherein twenty francs constitute a heavy gain—and the loss of a hundred sous is a serious calamity. These *carotteurs* buy one railway share, or one Canal, and linger about the Bourse till it rises a little above the price at which they purchased it, whereupon they hasten to sell. Thus the spirit of speculation, which, in London, is confined to some two or three thousand people, extends in Paris from one end of the capital to the other. Therefore all people are interested in news; therefore the men who sell the evening papers at the corners of the streets up to midnight, find purchasers among the working classes as plentifully as among the shopkeepers. Yet, in spite of this speculative spirit, the war is immensely popular. Every battalion that leaves the capital carries away with it the grateful remembrance of cheers and looks of encouragement; and I fully believe that not even the most hardened *carotteur* would like to realise his last speculation, if the stoppage of the French army in the East were to be the price of his success. It is this all-pervading enthusiasm which makes the playful spirit, that, in the midst of distress, has a pleasant voice and a happy

look. It is this spirit which led the people to cheer the emperor on his way, with his wife, to the southern baths last autumn—and to issue from their sombre garrets into the blaze of the Place de la Concorde, with songs upon their lips breathing hatred of Nicholas!

Innumerable, by the way, are the songs about Nicholas. Old gentlemen appear to sell thousands of fly-sheets in the crowded thoroughfares, upon which are printed, according to the vendors, "*des couplets très spirituels sur Nicholas!*" and briskly is the *Patrie* disposed of by the old ladies who sit at night behind paper lanterns in the open places, when their shrill voices promise important news from the theatre of war. And then of reports, how much might not be written? Why, there are three or four most important revelations to be heard in every street. One night last autumn the report ran through the Bourse, down the Rue Vivienne, into the Palais Royal, where it surprised very grave gentlemen over their *absinthe*, that Bucharest was in the hands of the allied armies, but that it had been taken after the most frightful slaughter. This report was the model of a Bourse lie. Not only was the fact known, the reporters had details—harrowing details. The allied armies had entered the town at two opposite gates, and had literally cut the Russians out of the place. In performing this sanguinary duty, two French regiments had been almost annihilated. And then the reporters, as they arrived in the Palais Royal, or sauntered under the hot roof of the Passage Jouffroy, added, with solemn looks, "This terrible catastrophe has not had much

effect upon rentes." The victory is an important one for the allies, it was alleged, but then the gloom of a loss so terrible on the part of the French has naturally checked the rise that would have ensued under happier circumstances. There are hundreds of these reports—some ostensibly obtained from ministers themselves—others procured, after horrible difficulties and considerable bribery, from a gentleman in the confidence of one of the generals. Then there are the reports which belong exclusively to the *carotteurs*. They are said to come direct from the valets of men in office, or from messengers to ministerial bureaux. All this speculation, enthusiasm, and positive distress; this playful endurance of misery surging about the great thoroughfares—here drowned in the coolness of a *canette*, there in the gentler forgetfulness of a *pistache*—here hidden under the fun of a *barrière* ball, there lost amid the glittering paths of *Mabille*—here forgotten under the roof of *Richefeu*, there left behind on entering one of the cabinets of the *Maison Riche*. Truly the Frenchman in distress is the pleasantest, jauntiest fellow, under the circumstances, to be met with on the face of the earth. Talk to him of the fine fleet in the Black Sea, and at once he forgets the hole at his elbow.

And on this account let us be inclined to paint his foibles as tenderly as possible, dwelling, on the contrary, with energy, upon his many fine qualities. In this spirit I would offer a few suggestions on those contrasts which writers have long loved to draw between the frisky Gallic cock and the demure British lion.

Indisputably the French prevalent notion is that Paris is the cradle as well as the finishing academy of every department of art and science—the spot upon which the highest point of modern civilisation is attained:—The Englishman's notion, it must be remarked, on the contrary, is that Paris is the city of pleasure, and of elegant pleasure, but that all which is solid and of serious account in the world has its home in England. My experience inclines me to the belief that both views are false. The Frenchman is more serious than the Englishman believes:—the real Englishman is an individual more inclined to laugh and enjoy himself than the Frenchman is ready to allow. You may distinguish an Englishman on the Boulevards from the crowd of Frenchmen who surround him—as, in Cheapside, you may pick out any stray Frenchman from amid the throng of Cheapside's citizens. In France the Englishman has a serious, half-comic look, with his measured walk, and simple dress:—In England the Frenchman's appearance strikes the observer as extravagant, if not vulgar. Thus this question viewed from both sides of the channel, obtains a light in which it has not often been examined by the English, and never by the French. Up to the present hour Parisians regard Englishmen as a dull, heavy, material race, given only to money-making; deficient in imagination, but sufficient in the requirements of a bank parlour. We are more discerning in regard to our neighbours. We are inclined to believe that they have few solid qualities, but we willingly tender them the most enthusiastic praise for their generous impulses, their

exquisite taste, their great aspirations. The truth is that we know them better than they know us: and yet our mutual ignorance is still remarkable. It is in doing away with this ignorance that the alliance is likely to do good. The French have yet to discover that the poetic element dwells sometimes in London: that the English are establishing a notable school of art; that Britons can amuse themselves and do occasionally laugh; and that the soul of every son of Albion is not nailed, like a bad shilling, to his counter. On the other hand the English nation will be convinced that behind the dense Gallic beard there is a serious brain sometimes: that solid works are performed within the imperial dominions. The verdicts of fifty years ago have never been since reconsidered. Thus the French were celebrated in England for their tailors, their milliners, their hair-dressers, their dancing-masters and cooks. Thus the English were esteemed in Paris as rather sagacious brutes who ate any quantity of beef, and could attend to cutlery. These reputations have been preserved up to this time, and French writers have not scrupled to pander to the prejudices of their countrymen most completely by continually repeating worn-out errors.

Tony Lumpkin is to the Frenchman who has never crossed the channel, a fair type of the English character. When excursion trains convey thousands of Frenchmen annually to London, not a few of these excited passengers will wonder at the absence of top-boots amongst us. On the other hand, when thousands of new excursionists shall arrive in Paris this summer, many of them will marvel when they come before the great

industrial establishments, which may be noticed at the Barrières of the French capital. They will also marvel when they learn that vast works, which usually take many years to complete, have been finished, within a stone's throw of the Tuileries, in less than a year. As I write, two magnificent electric lights throw an artificial daylight upon hundreds of workmen, who swarm like ants about the foundations of an enormous building that, almost as soon as these pages are printed and bound, will be completed, and that will perhaps receive swarms of Exhibition visitors. An unprejudiced visitor who might drop upon this scene any night, after a twelve hour's journey from London, would not be inclined to deny the proposition—that the French have solid work in them. Pleasure is with them a study which they pursue passionately. But then they pursue everything with ardour. Their troops are unrivalled when called upon to charge; but inferior, for instance, to Scotch regiments, when it is their business to stand fire; their love of science and literature is passionate, but it is not so discriminating as the calmer feeling with which the Englishman or the German, weighs and judges. Still it is not because they are passionate that they cannot be serious; thus in the present time, when the influence of the English alliance is sensibly coming over the French capital and the French provinces; when our neighbours are vehemently praising the solidity of our commercial companies, and are beginning to understand the forethought upon which our gigantic systems are based of providing against the casualties of life by making use of the law of averages,—in this time, we may remark

elements which are destined to make France in the future, a commercial power, that will be our dangerous, let us hope always our friendly rival, in the great markets of the world !

It is time to talk for the last time about frog-eating and wife-selling ; it is time to allow the Frenchman's remarkable beard without ridicule ; it is time also Parisians should absolutely believe that some kind of art is pursued in London—that we have heard of electricity—and that a London tailor has been known, at all events by the oldest inhabitant, to make a coat fit a customer.

How far French writers are from this knowledge of England I will leave readers who may peruse "The English painted by the French" to judge. In the pages which follow these introductory notes on a few of the social aspects of Paris under the Bees, I have endeavoured to avoid the errors which are conspicuous in the Parisian writers who have described London. I have seen little to laugh at, and much, in the social aspect of the people, to admire warmly. I like the pride with which the successful son may be seen, showing his rough country relatives the wonders of the Boulevards. I like the kindly feeling which generally exists between master and servant—a kindly feeling that exactly realises the noble aspiration with which Mr. Justice Talfourd closed his brilliant career. The French master talks with his servant, discusses points of news with him, treats him, in short, as a fellow-creature ; the French servant prides himself upon his dignité d'homme, and sees in his master only a more fortunate fellow than himself. He treats him

always respectfully, serves him faithfully, but feels no debasing bashfulness in his presence. He does not even call the man he serves, his master—he is his “patron.” This feeling is undoubtedly a result of the revolutionary spirit which has thrice within little more than half a century, broken out in barricades, and ended in the reinstatement of the form of government which it endeavoured to destroy. While the enthusiastic populace were decorating the trees of liberty, the goddess was making her way to the frontiers, or disappearing under the soil. Moderate men now declare that this tree of liberty grows but slowly; every year it puts forth buds of promise for those who nurse it tenderly. Blood rots its very roots; its leaves and shade reward only the gardeners who are gentle with it; and if it be the veriest nursling of a tree now, time will pass rapidly and draw its branches forth—provided men will honestly work and win—even with the eagle fluttering about it, and imperial bees humming in the petals of its flowers.

CHAPTER II.

ENGLISH SPOKEN.

THE traveller who arrives at the Paris terminus of the Great Northern Railway, in a well-filled train, late at night, knowing nothing of the Gallic tongue, may be strangely puzzled. He is ushered into a large cold room, where he waits for half an hour, while the luggage is forwarded from the van to a convenient platform, for the purpose of undergoing the usual custom-house search. It is, however, when the railway official throws the door of this cold room wide open, and declares that Messieurs les voyageurs may now pick out their respective portmanteaus, that the traveller becomes at once sorely puzzled. By the aid of vigorous pantomime he may be able to convey a sense of his want to a Frenchman who speaks French. Unhappily it is his usual fate to be pounced upon by a biped who speaks a strange language known in certain parts of France as English; but which no Englishman can understand. Anglican-French is not an euphonious tongue; but Gallic-English beats it—in discord. The Parisian commissioner will talk this wild language, even to Englishmen who have been long resident in France. Answer him in French, he

will still reply in his favourite jargon. Tell him that you have "*trois bagages*," he replies that Monsieur's "*lokge*" shall be attended to. And then, when he gets excited, when some opposing commissioner crosses his path to lure you from him, how terribly wild is this extraordinary person's tongue! Yes, as I have written, he *will* speak it, for has he not gone through a "*cours d'Anglais*," and should he admit that his English is of little use to the hotel, will he not be dismissed? Lucky is the traveller who escapes from him.

To follow the announcements in the shop-windows of Paris, the simple-minded traveller would imagine that an English master would enjoy a sinecure in Paris. Say that he desires to find lodgings. At a house where French only is spoken he will possibly be puzzled, for the landlady will inevitably ask him whether he requires an apartment in three or four pieces—"pieces" being the idiom for rooms, and "apartments" that for a flat, or series of apartments shut off from the rest of the house. It is clear that to wend his way through idioms of this puzzling nature he must have considerable patience. But he will find patience will be more conspicuously required when he sees, hanging up under a huge gateway, "apartments let, to be furnished." Perhaps he infers from this announcement, that some person of a confiding nature had taken apartments; that, having once found himself in possession, he had discovered that he could not furnish them—hence this pathetic appeal to the sympathy of the public. Perhaps the appeal was made by a newly married

couple,—perhaps it proceeded from the student who relied upon the advertised perfection of six lessons.

Say that the visitor strolls away to the Rotonde, to enjoy a cup of coffee, and read *Galignani*. He turns to the advertisement columns in the hope of finding the rooms he requires. Presently he discovers the announcement of a restaurant “done” into English. The reader is informed that at this establishment the gourmet can have extraordinary delicacies for two francs and a half, including a bottle of Mâcon. The announcement might be attractive, if it could be understood. The dinner is thus described: “one has a potage; three dishes; two legumes, and a dessert. N.B. the potage does not displace itself,”—in plainer English, if the diner declines soup he cannot have an extra dish in its stead. The reader might glean from this entry in the bill that the potage is some happy combination easily digestible, since it has no inclination to move itself: but what can the Englishman make of two legumes? yet this tempting bill of fare is specially translated for his comprehension, and inserted, that it may the more surely reach him, in the English paper of Paris. Well, he wonders, and perhaps out of mere curiosity, wanders to this notable restaurant. Here he finds a bill of fare printed in English: he refers to it eagerly for explanations. Observe the note under the title: “One is prayed not to ask for things out of season.” “One” is tempted by this prayer to look over the book full of delicacies which it prefaces. One finds that “hashed seal” is a dish recommended: that “chops of kid” may be enjoyed at a reasonable rate. One tastes these

delicacies; the hashed seal turning out to be hashed teal. One does not care to patronise this restaurant a second time, particularly as one finds important placards posted against the dead wall in the Rue Vivienne, descriptive of the gastronomic temptations meant to draw crowds to "Le Rosbif."—Le Rosbif is a Gallic-English house, on the Place de la Bourse, where Parisians are led to believe they enjoy the roast beef of Old England. The bills of this establishment, printed upon gay yellow paper, are in French and English. In the English translation one is reminded again of the popularity of the legumes; and the retiring are informed that "one can have private dinning rooms." One may be tempted to try Le Rosbif; and possibly it may be a good establishment, where the traveller may find better meat than English. At Vachette's the visitor is informed that there are "romms for private parties, and privated romms."

Gallic-English of the peculiar character already instanced, is not used simply in shops and restaurants; it does duty even in educated circles: it is pressed into the service of the papers. The reader at the Rotonde may find various specimens of this outlandish language even in the important journals of France. The *Débats* is indignantly describing some instance of ruffianism, and in endeavouring to convey to its readers all the atrocity of which the monster in hand is guilty, makes him exclaim, in his moment of passionate cruelty:—"Let us them lynch!" The *Siècle* has a vivid description of the "Cold-Stream Guards!" Another paper has a ludicrous mistake in the con-

clusion of a quack advertisement: it terminates thus, "Cases created." Perhaps however, the English word which the French never succeed in applying properly is "comfortable." They use it frequently and always improperly. One tradesman however is conspicuous for this. Being in the English quarter he hopes to lure Britons to his premises, by an announcement placed in his windows advertising "comfortable pastry," and lately the public have been treated with a "comfortable review." Even the Mont de Pieté, speaks Gallic-English. Over the doorway of the bureau in the Rue Condé will be found the attractive word, "pawnbrok." Everybody has heard of the French bouledogue; the biftek, and the boulingrin: these are established Gallic-English words, which we cannot hope to disturb, even by a model system of teaching languages.

Gallic-English is to be heard in every corner of Paris; it is talked by the student of the Ecole du Droit, who asks you whether "you speak an Englishmans?" I once heard it well spoken by an actor on the stage of the Vaudeville—who, playing the Emperor Napoleon in the act of planning the defeat of the English off Boulogne, and noticing a particular British tar retreating at a wonderful pace, exclaimed in Gallic-English of the most finished style—"He is a foutif Englishman!" This exclamation brought down thunders of applause. It cost me some time to discover what kind of animal, of what race ethnologically, a "foutif Englishman" could be. By slow degrees, and a dictionary, I arrived at the conclusion that the author of this Napoleonic drama

had found this word—or something like it—set against the French word for retreating. The English word would possibly be *furtive*. Again, the victim of a slight railway accident, exhibiting his broken language and his riven trousers to me one afternoon, earnestly desired inspection of the “accident extraordinaire that had arrived to ’im.” He had not learnt that the words happen and arrive are never synonymous in English.

Few absurdities go beyond the false systems on which most English pupils are taught French, and the French are taught English. The finished pupil of a French master who shall have been assiduous in his attention to accent and grammar, will often arrive in Paris the speaker of a language that will cost him a thousand difficulties. At the restaurant, instead of calling for his “addition,” when he has finished his dinner, he will inevitably inquire for his billet. He will take “du café” after his dinner, instead of a “demi-tasse;” he will be incommoded with a bottle of beer, when he is thirsty, instead of a choppe? He can read Montaigne, but he cannot understand Henri the waiter, who will offer to his customers, “Byecutlets of veal,” meaning the “entrecôtes,” in Anglican-English—the ribs. It is easy to multiply examples.

Most commercial men know that lately a rage for docks has seized upon the Parisian mind. The Napoleon docks, that are to receive the vast tonnage which is to make its way to Paris, have long been the topic of conversation in the cafés and elsewhere. This rage has been, at last, turned to account by a cheap tailor of comprehensive mind; who deals with

thousands ; and informs the people of Paris, through the medium of huge posters, that he has no less than five thousand "coachmanns" ready for their inspection. These "coachmanns" appear to be thick coats or cloaks, just now popular in the French capital. But it is to the sign of this great tailor's establishment that the attention of the Parisian is directed. This sign is "AU DOCKS DE LA TOILETTE !"

On the other hand we may find specimens of Anglican-French no less absurd. Indeed, to find these, it is only necessary, unfortunately, to turn to the popular books of instruction published in England. For instance, specimens of pronunciation copied verbatim from a new and popular child's book, will show how lessons for giving English children a Parisian accent, are framed. The author directs his little pupils to talk about an "aid-de-cang ;" to mix in the "bo-móngde ;" not to believe that they can do everything by a "coo-de-mang ;" in reading, never to skip the parts of a book, in their eagerness to learn the "den-noo-mang ;" to take sufficient exercise to check any tendency to "ang-bong-póing ;" to avoid "ang-wee" in their "ang-tray" into life ; never to indulge in foolish "zheu-de-mo," nor to lose solid acquirements in the enticements of "zheu-de-spre." He discourages "mo-vays hongte" as "ootray." Imagine poor little wretches cast upon Parisian society talking a jargon like this ! It might be understood at Islington, but it would be listened to with wonder in the Tuileries gardens.

Just now, however, all the walls of Paris are covered with posters announcing cheap "cours

d'Anglais," and we have reason to hope that these advertisements are not without their effect. The time has arrived in London as in Paris, for schools where Gallic-French, and Anglican-English might be learned, particularly if we are to remain the fast friends we pretend to be at present. Again, the Ministry of Public Instruction have been employed upon a new and simplified system of teaching French grammar, and not only French grammar, but the grammar of all languages. This new system is I believe, founded upon Professor F. Perron's "*Essai d'une Reforme dans l'Enseignement Grammatical*," which was presented to the French Academy. The benefits which would flow from the adoption of an universal system of grammatical instruction are considerable. Such a system would facilitate the spread of languages by easing the student's difficulties. At the present time the boy who has to learn two or three languages, has also to master as many systems of instruction. Under a system of universal grammar, of which Ollendorff's books present some faint idea, the knowledge of one grammar would give a student the key to every language.

CHAPTER III.

DEPARTED THIS LIFE IN PARIS.

DEPARTED this life on the 10th instant, Louis Leroy, cantonnier.

Poor Louis ! he had had a hard time of it. Up at work sweeping the streets, after the chiffoniers had hauled over the rubbish, at three o'clock every morning, even within a few days of his death ; hoping every year to be at least a sous-chef, and every year being disappointed, yet doing his hard work cheerfully for his two francs a-day ! He had passed the lusty years of his life, the hard work being relieved at times by little wine parties at the Barrières, or by little excursions to suburban fêtes. Death, when he stalks into the mansarde, does not surround himself with that state which accompanies him to the first floor. Poor Louis' wife had her ear pressed against his heart, when this heart throbbed its last. Wild was the agony with which the poor woman felt the perfect stillness of death. She was slow to believe that all was over : but Death marked his prey too plainly, very soon : indubitably Louis had worn his glazed hat for the last time. Friends, half in sympathy and half for curiosity, flocked in to see the body. To

most people, but, it would seem, more especially to women, there is an irresistible attraction in a chamber of death. They look, their hearts wildly throbbing, at the dead: the scene is a horror, but in the same way that a precipice is a horror.

An officious friend was soon on his way to the *mairie* of the tenth *arrondissement*, to announce the *cantonnier's* decease to the authorities; for the man had ceased to be a private citizen, and had become the property of the municipality. The hour of the death, its cause, the names of the deceased,—these were the points which occupied the attention of the authorities. But these preliminaries fairly disposed of, a very important point remained to be considered. It should be known, that the dead of Paris are the property of the municipal authorities, and form, moreover, a valuable part of the municipal revenue. Thus, Louis fairly dead, must be turned to the profit of his native city. And to realise this profit in a business-like manner, the authorities have made funeral arrangements, which I shall now proceed to describe, as they were submitted to the consideration of poor Louis' friend.

It should be understood, that the municipal authorities have alone the right of burying the dead of Paris. It is impossible to employ a private undertaker. The *Préfet de la Seine* is the great mourner-in-chief of the capital, and now acts under the authority of an imperial decree, dated the 2nd of October, 1852. This decree put in force, it must be at once owned, many reforms in the municipal manner of burying the dead. It recognised the claims

of the poor: it established some kind of equality at the gates of the cemeteries. For, to the present emperor, is due the credit of having attached two priests to each cemetery, who are charged with the functions of reading the burial service gratuitously over the bodies of all the dead brought for interment. Under the old system, the religious service was altogether dispensed with, if the friends of the deceased could not pay the money demanded by the priest. Inevitably, under this old regime Louis would have been interred without any religious ceremony whatever; as it is, the service will be read over the body when it reaches Mont Parnasse.

By the decree of 1852 the municipal body is authorised to enter into a contract with the lowest bidder for the performance of the "Pompes Funèbres" of Paris. Thus, all the funerals of the capital are performed by one establishment; which establishment is subjected to the strictest official scrutiny, and cannot charge a fraction beyond the prices clearly set forth in the lists kept at the various mairies. For these municipal cares, the city of Paris levies tolls on all bodies. Thus the toll on the body of a working man, buried as simply as possible, is six francs; while that on the body of a rich person, whose friends indulge in a first-class funeral, is no less than forty francs. Let the friends of a deceased person indulge in the slightest extravagance, even in the matter of an oak coffin, and at once the city tax is raised from six to twenty francs. The heavy tax is imposed in order that the bodies of the poor may be decently buried;—thus the "service extraordinaire" helps to pay for the cheap

rate at which the "service ordinaire" is performed; since coffins are furnished to the friends of the poor at prices much under their prime cost. The contractor is compelled to sell coffins to the poor at the rate of two francs for the coffin of a child two years old; three francs for that of a child seven years old; and so on up to eight francs, which is the highest price for a poor person's coffin. By his agreement with the authorities, this contractor is also compelled to keep up a stock of six thousand coffins, which are distributed in dépôts throughout the twelve arrondissements. And Louis' friend, having given in the name and age of the deceased, is asked at once the class funeral, and as a sequence, the class coffin, he chooses. He may wade through the funeral tariff and choose for himself. Of course the ordinary service is the cheapest;—for indigent people it is even performed gratuitously. But the relatives of Louis have some sense of dignity, and will bury him at their own cost; therefore his friend looks through the tariff. Let us glance over his shoulder.

We find the extraordinary service divided into nine classes, all varying in splendour, all priced as to pomp! Thus there are ten ways to the grave, at fares varying from seven thousand one hundred and eighty-four francs, to twelve francs seventy-five centimes! The same variety may be noticed in the matter of coffins. The municipality allow the Parisians to bury their dead in coffins of any price between that of the satin and velvet receptacle worth seven hundred and ten francs, and that of the poor man worth eight francs! In this way the man whose sombre duty it is to

attend at the mairie for the purpose of determining the exact class and section to which his dead friend shall belong, is strangely puzzled. In the first place, each class is divided into two sections; and then again, the tariffs are separated into a tariff for religious service, and one for the service performed by the contractor. Nor does the subdivision end here. The religious tariff is subdivided into cost of personal attendance, and cost of material. The contractor's tariff is parted into expenses at the house where the body lies, expenses of the cortége, and expenses for hangings at the church. All these subdivisions are strangely puzzling to the visitor who arrives at the funeral department of the mairie for the first time; and Louis' friend may be excused the time he occupied in running through the various lists.

The religious ceremony for a funeral of a first class, and the first section of the class, amounts to eight hundred and fifty-six francs; whereas that of a funeral of the ninth class amounts only to nine francs seventy-five centimes. But, then, let us notice the difference in the two ceremonies, and allow, at all events, that the rich man has his money's worth. Thus, the presence of Monsieur le Curé is estimated at sixteen francs; the attendance of two vicars is priced at eight francs; while eighteen simple priests assist at the grand ceremony for fifty-four francs. Ten choristers cost ten francs; the sacristan, three francs; two beadles, four francs; two vergers, four francs; a cross-bearer, two francs; supplementary singers, sixty francs; the organ, twenty francs; the offering (a note in the page here informs the visitor that this item is left to

the generosity of the parties who order the service, being in its essential nature, voluntary); high mass six francs; three priests to attend the body to the cemetery, thirty francs: these are among the items for personal services. Then follows the bill for materials. This includes seventy-two francs for twenty-four fine wax candles, at eight francs per kilogramme; one hundred and fifty francs for fifty wax candles distributed round the body; eighty-eight francs for eleven kilogrammes of fine wax for the use of the priests; twenty francs for the use of the cross, altar-candlesticks, &c.; one hundred francs for the lustres; bell-ringing when the body enters the church, two francs and a-half; bell ringing when the body is carried from the church, two francs and a-half. The foregoing are among the charges for the religious ceremony which precedes the interment of the rich. But religion having made up its "little bill," the contractor has yet his account to produce for decorating the church. Amongst these items, let us remark twenty-four francs for the use of a pair of black curtains, which are hung before the principal entrance to the sacred edifice; other exterior hangings, one hundred and twenty-eight francs. The interior black hangings include six hundred francs worth of black cloth, at the rate of forty centimes per superficial mètre; one hundred and eighty francs for fringes; a black velvet girdle round the church, fringed, one thousand and forty francs; carpetting, five hundred francs; one hundred chairs, covered with black, one hundred and fifty francs; the catafalque, including *fifty silver candlesticks*, for allegorical statues, at

twenty-five francs each, and a funeral lamp, with one hundred jets, at one franc per jet—nine hundred and twenty francs. These items help to make up the great total of the high mass which precedes the interment of the rich, in Paris. From this list, however, poor Louis's friend turns rapidly through the classes; finds here some priests, and there some candles lopped off the ceremony, to suit the pockets of the less wealthy, till he arrives at the description of the service the Church accords to the dead of the ninth class. He finds that the personal attendance here includes one vicar at one franc and a-half, one priest at one franc twenty-five centimes, one chorister at fifty centimes, one beadle at fifty centimes, and one assistant sacristan at fifty centimes. The low mass is put down at one franc and a-half. The lights for this service cost a franc; and the ornaments, cross included, are set down at fifty centimes.

Let us now turn to the house in which the rich man's body lies. The exterior of the house is covered with black cloth and silver ornaments; black curtains are gathered across the gateway; within the door there is a rich altar, with tapers burning; the splendid coffin is surrounded with tapers also. Then passers-by pause to sprinkle the holy water, and devoutly cross themselves. The use of all this drapery and these rich ornaments costs five hundred and thirty-nine francs. And for the pomp with which the coffin is conveyed to the cemetery, the contractor presents a further bill of one thousand six hundred and thirty-six francs. This bill includes two masters of the ceremonies at twenty-four francs each;

a hearse, richly ornamented and plumed, drawn by four richly caparisoned horses, at three hundred francs; fourteen mourning coaches, at two hundred and eighty francs; appointments for the coachmen, at fifteen francs per coachman, two hundred and ten francs; drapery for the harness, at ten francs per coach, one hundred and forty francs; and ornamented poles for the conveyance of the body, six francs. These are the splendid items of the pomp that gives importance to a rich man's death, in Paris; but this is pomp, it is evident at a glance, to which Louis's friend cannot aspire.

Again the friend wanders to the ninth class to trace the difference in price and in appointment. Here he finds that the only charge incurred at the house of the defunct, is one of three francs for the mortuary cloth, which is suspended before the door; this charge, and three francs for the conveyance of the body to the ceremony, make up the contractor's bill to the friends of the poor man in Paris. Thus while the rich may indulge their fancy in velvet-hangings and innumerable candles, the poor may be decently buried for eighteen francs seventy-five centimes, in a coffin supplied for eight francs. If, moreover, they be contented to have their deceased friend conveyed at once to the cemetery, there to receive the benediction of the cemetery priest, the whole cost of interment, including the municipal tax, does not exceed seventeen francs, or fourteen shillings!

The dead Louis's friend, thinking of the slender economies the poor cantonnier was able to deposit in the caisse; thinking, too, of the use the money would

be to the widow, decided upon the fourteen shillings funeral! But the widow insisted upon having low mass said upon her late husband's body, and so added nine francs seventy-five centimes to the funeral account. The friend left the mairie; the mairie gave notice to the contractor; the official surgeon inspected the body; the body lay the legal four-and-twenty hours (a space of time which must elapse, according to the French law, between death and burial); the contractor sent notice of the hour at which the body would be fetched; touters from the marbriers of Mont Parnasse pestered the widow with offers of cheap crosses: till, at the appointed time, numbers of friends having assembled in the street, opposite the dead man's lodgings; the plain hearse was driven up by the coachman in a black cocked hat; the four porters arrived in their grey suits; and lastly, the ordonnateur, neatly dressed in black, with a white neckcloth, and a black cocked hat, inspected the arrangements—to see, on the part of the municipality, that the contractor had fulfilled all the details of his bargain, and that the interment papers were in order. Having satisfied himself on these points, this official (who has the charge of every funeral) ordered the coffin to be placed in the open hearse, and to be borne on its last journey. As the coffin appears at the gateway, all the assembled friends and strangers uncover, and remain bare-headed until the procession moves forward. And then, the law compels all carts and carriages to draw up while the body passes on its way to Mont Parnasse.

We will follow it, up to the Rue de Seine, and go with

it, on its way, by the Gardens of the Luxembourg to the Barrière Mont Parnasse, near which a special way has been made through the walls, to the cemetery entrance. At the entrance, the guardian of the ground examines the interment papers. This guardian, dressed in a sky-blue suit, with a black-cocked hat, and a mourning sword-band, may be perceived seated in his little conciergerie, before the enclosed ground set apart for the interment of sisters of charity. All preliminary matters being settled, the procession moves forward, and winds to the left, up the narrow road flanked on either side by rows of graves: here by private chapels, there by deep masses of black crosses, and little enclosures which mark the occupants of a fosse commune.

The remains of Louis are also on their way to a fosse commune. As the hearse slowly ascends the hill, on the summit of which this general grave is dug, let us notice the points of observation connected with this cheap burial space.

The fosse commune is a long, wide trench, about six feet deep, cut across a section of the cemetery. Here the poor are buried, packed closely side by side, and head to feet; and the ground is daily thrown over so much of the ditch as has received its layer of dead. The common grave has always the aspect of a half-filled ditch; and to stand bye early in the morning or late in the afternoon, and watch the approach of the many occupants of this common home, is to witness one of the most curious scenes enacted daily near the French capital. The fosse commune, where Louis was buried, was on the highest point of Mont

Parnasse. From the edge of this yawning grave there was a fine view of the country ; but the grave-diggers and the guardian were alike dead to the charm of the landscape, or, apparently, to the lessons of the moment. One was sitting upon the mound, filling his pipe ; the second, or grave-digger in chief, was in the trench, waiting to receive the coffins. A little way off, a cemetery guardian, in his blue suit, was singly sitting in his watch-box. A few stragglers were waiting the new arrivals. It was about one o'clock when I arrived, and already many occupants had been that morning added to the number in the common grave, as it was easy to see from the wet shelving mould, studded here and there with black crosses, surmounted with new yellow or white wreaths. Under each of these crosses was a corpse. As I stood there, an old, ruddy woman came up to the grave-digger who was filling his pipe, bearing a heavy black cross under her arm ; when the following conversation passed between them :—

Woman. "Here's a cross for a monsieur named Baudin."

Grave-digger. "Baudin ! I don't remember the name. [*To the grave-digger in the trench.*] Do you remember where a monsieur of the name of Baudin was put ? "

Grave-digger in chief. "Baudin ! Ah, I think it was that heavy gentleman. Here, give me the cross : I think it was somewhere hereabouts."

The cross is thrown down to the chief, who carelessly sticks it into the shelving earth before him—and thus M. Baudin's resting-place may or may not

be indicated. But the attendants at the common grave have not much time to attend to details of this nature. The chief had hardly planted the tribute to M. Baudin's memory, when glancing upwards, he beheld a mourning party at the edge of the capacious grave. Two coffin-bearers, in grey costume, offered him, enclosed in a deal coffin, with a raised lid, the body of a child. At hand stood the parents, the poor mother weeping bitterly; the father, with two yellow wreaths on one arm, a child on the other. The priest attached to the cemetery advanced, and repeated the Latin prayers of his church. He then sprinkled the little box with holy water; the grave-digger, who stood in the grave, then took the child's remains, and packing it firmly against the last row of coffins, stood back while the friends advanced, one after the other, each to sprinkle holy water upon it. The mother, as she drew back, wrung her hands, and calling aloud, as the next funeral advanced to the common grave, "Oh! mon pauvre enfant! mon pauvre enfant!" was hurried off by her husband. The grave-diggers then hastily threw a thin covering of earth over the child's coffin (just enough to hide it from view), stuck the parental offering into the earth above it; and then, clearing the next square space, looked up for the new-comer.

There was, in this rapid, business-like burial system, something that chilled the blood: the men seemed to load the common grave as calmly as our City porters load their masters' waggons. The baby was followed by a soldier. I noticed the arrival of this cortège, preceded, in a carriage, by a priest and a private. The priest and the private alighted as the hearse drew up;

and then, as the bearers, or *croque-morts*, as the Parisians call them, conveyed the coffin from the hearse to the grave, and gently pushed it down the shelving earth, the ecclesiastic placed himself at the edge of the grave, and the private holding the silver goblet of holy water, stood by, to make the responses. This dead soldier was followed by about twenty friends, all of whom sprinkled his coffin, and some of whom made offerings of wreaths to mark his resting-place. As this party retired, and the grave-diggers were busy covering the soldier's coffin, the body of poor Louis arrived. The many friends who followed him all sprinkled his grave, nor did they leave the spot unmarked. For five years and a half will Louis's body be in the common grave, and then make way perhaps, for that of his child.

It is said that the Emperor wished to do away with these common graves, but that serious objections to the suppression of the system turned him from his purpose. Certainly, to the passing observer, there is something revolting in the sight of rows of closely packed coffins, all arranged together in the most business-like manner; but seen thoughtfully, the system has its bright side. "Here at all events, sir," said a man to me, pointing into the trench, "here we have equality."

The poor are buried by the city authorities, and for this duty special arrangements are made between the municipal authorities and the contractor. By the present contract ten thousand francs are paid annually to the contractor, for which sum the receiver undertakes to furnish gratuitously a coffin and a shroud to any person who may die in a destitute condition; on

the other hand, the authorities undertake to pay to the contractor five francs on the body of each person who dies and is buried by his friends according to the rules of the ordinary service, which service I have already described. These five francs are paid in order to enable the contractor to do the service of the poor under the prime cost of such service. For the exclusive privilege of furnishing funeral pomp to the rich, however, the contractor pays a handsome sum, viz., seven hundred and eighty-four thousand francs annually to the city. In return, the sum the city engages to pay him for burial service is one hundred and fifteen thousand francs. The amount which the contractors who now have the funeral monopoly of Paris, have agreed to pay to the city, on the funeral furniture they supply, equals eighty-three francs and a half per cent. on the charges they are allowed to make. On the funeral furniture which is positively used, as crapes, &c., and which do not serve twice, the per-centage on the charges to be paid into the municipal caisse, is fifteen per cent. And in this way the fifty candles which burn about the rich man's coffin help to light the little jets that glimmer at the low mass over the poor man.

The friends of the buried Louis stroll away from the cemetery, along the outer boulevard, past the stalls where women sell the bright funeral crowns, and curious pictures of weeping angels, &c. painted upon gelatine; the evergreen crosses and other devices with which sad relatives come to decorate the graves of their relations. Their love of planting roses and crowns over the dead, which occupies so many people

on Sundays, and which I have described in my paper on the Pilgrims of Paris at Montmartre, is here seen in full force, under the fine trees of the outer boulevard of Mont Parnasse. There is perhaps not a prettier sight in all Paris, than that of this boulevard on a Sunday afternoon, when the bright funeral crowns are piled up under the fine shady trees, and the gaily dressed holiday folk crowd along the cool avenue, buying these pretty offerings by the way. And within the cemetery are evidences of a brisk trade in grave decorations. The rich are in the little chapels over the graves of their relatives ; the poor are edging their way through the narrow alleys which separate the crowded enclosures over the fosse commune. Nearly all the graves of the fosse commune are marked with a little black railing, with a cross at the head of it ;—these cost eleven francs. But some of the graves are marked by the buried child's cradle, which the parents have painted black, and filled with flowers. Over other graves are little chapels, and sheds full of the child's toys. Briskly every Sunday the gardening goes forward : the old man, bare-headed, is trimming the roses that flourish above the resting-place of his daughter : the widow, with reddened eyes, draws the weeds from the little enclosure which marks her husband's grave. All these graves are decorated with crowns, some have an immense number upon them. I counted, on the 12th of June, 1854, no less than two hundred and twenty-eight white crowns, some ornamented with silver flowers, piled upon a young girl's grave, her death bearing date October 7th, 1853 ! A man near me estimated the money spent

upon these offerings at two hundred francs. This love of making grave-offerings is encouraged by the marbriers who live near the cemetery. These tradesmen drive a brisk trade. They have a regular system of touting. They send a clerk daily, to the mairie of each arrondissement connected with their cemetery, to get a list of the deaths that have been registered. Armed with this list, the clerks visit the houses where the dead lie, and offer their services. This trade is adapted to every class. If the bereaved family be poor, they have cheap black railings and crosses at eleven francs; if, on the contrary, it be rich, they offer their temporary tomb for the use of the friends, while a bricked grave and a monument are built. To meet this latter class of customers, each marbrier has a temporary vault in the cemetery, which he keeps constantly at the service of his customers. Each marbrier also employs a cemetery gardener, and cultivates flowers for the graves. He enters into contracts with the friends of the dead. For instance, he has a list of subscribers, who, on payment of thirty sous per month, have a constant supply of fresh flowers kept within the little enclosure of the fosse commune in which they may be interested. He pays his gardeners about two francs a day, and thus realises a large profit upon his list of subscribers. But those poor people who cannot afford to spend the monthly thirty sous, do the gardening themselves, giving a gardener at hand a sou for a can of water occasionally. There are stated charges for grave flowers. A rose-tree costs one franc; a circle, or cross of box planted within the

grave enclosure, may be had for three francs. So vigorously is this grave gardening carried on, that there is need for twenty watering-carts in the cemetery of Mont Parnasse. The marbriers who flourish on this burial-ground are estimated at fifteen; and the women who derive a living from the supply of funeral crowns to it, are forty strong. These women seem to get a good living at their employment: you see them merrily chatting together under the trees, as they form and decorate the crowns, and hang them up to attract visitors.

The friend once buried, his followers slowly walk from the cemetery, generally to Richefeu's. Here they assemble to eat bread and cheese, drink cannettes of wine, and talk over the qualities of the companion they have buried. Bread and cheese and wine appear to be the acknowledged funeral refreshment; and it is not unusual for these funeral parties to grow very lively at Richefeu's. A working man gave me his experiences as a funeral follower. He had been to two funerals the week before I spoke to him. At one of them the party of friends was fourteen strong; and this party, before separating, drank thirty litres of wine. The conversation, according to him, turned first upon the merits of the deceased; next, upon religion, on which subject violent disputes arose; and, at last, upon general politics. According to this man, better class funeral guests ordered bottles instead of measures of wine,—bottles at fifteen sous each.

Of funeral pomp, as it is managed in France, little need be said. The cocked-hats worn by the coachmen—by the *ordonnateurs* (who are compelled always to

wear their funeral clothes while they remain in the administration), and by other officials connected with the ceremony ; and the open hearse in which the coffin is laid, and, if the funeral be one of the "service extraordinaire," is covered with a handsome pall—these are the strange points to English eyes.

In 1847, the contractors for Paris buried twenty-four thousand eight hundred and seventeen persons. Of this number no less than sixteen thousand eight hundred and eighteen were buried by ordinary service. Of those with extraordinary service, which the reader will remember is divided into nine classes, twenty-seven persons were buried with all the pomp of the first class ; one hundred and sixteen were carried to the grave by the second class ; three hundred and thirteen by the third class ; four hundred and eighty by the fourth class ; one thousand one hundred and sixty-two by the fifth class ; two thousand nine hundred and seventy-five by the sixth class ; two thousand six hundred and five by the seventh class ; fifty-seven by the eighth class ; two hundred and sixty-four by the ninth class. In this year the municipality paid to the contractors for gratuitous funerals no less a sum than one hundred and seventy-three thousand seven hundred and nineteen francs. To give an idea of the large funeral establishment which the contractors are compelled to keep up, we may notice that, in 1847, the food and veterinary cost of the funeral horses amounted in value to one hundred and twenty-six thousand eight hundred and thirty-five francs. No less than one hundred and six horses are constantly *engaged* in conveying the dead of Paris to their last

rest. In 1847 no less than eight thousand nine hundred and fifty-six coffins with winding-cloths were distributed gratuitously among the poor.

This funeral machinery is governed on the part of the municipality by an inspector, who receives four thousand five hundred francs a-year, and by his deputy, who receives an annual stipend of fifteen hundred francs. There are also thirty-two ordonnateurs at salaries varying from two thousand four hundred to eighteen hundred francs. The bearers, who carry the coffins, are paid salaries varying from one thousand to eight hundred francs. In 1847 thirty-nine workmen were constantly employed making coffins for the dead of Paris ; and, to conclude these notes on the funeral industry of the capital, it may be stated that the burial of the dead employed in 1847 four hundred and ninety-two men, fifty-two women, and two boys ; in all, five hundred and forty-six individuals.

Thus certain men, who stickle for equality, see with disgust the railway train composed of three classes, may find matter for vehement condemnation in the details of the nine classes into which Parisian funeral carriages are divided. But surely we may forget to sneer at the fifty candles burnt about the coffins of the rich, when we remember that out of the profits derived from these candles, the decent burial of the indigent is paid.

CHAPTER IV.

PARIS WITH ITS KNIFE AND FORK.

PARIS dinners are as various as Paris fashions. You may dine for four sous at a barrière, or for four pounds at the Maison Riche ; you may have a ragout for three sous or eight francs ; you may take your demi-tasse and its accompanying cognac for two sous or you may pay one franc for them. Between the Frères Provençaux and the restaurants of Mont Parnasse, there are gradations and varieties to catch every pocket, and to pander to the most artificial palate. There are, in short, as many descriptions of dinners in Paris as there are editions of Brillat De Savarin's Physiology of the Palate. But then these dinners are all dinners of delicacies. The rich rentier sips his black coffee after dinner, and assists his digestion with a canard ; the working man too, must have his black coffee and his brandy. Soup enters into the necessities of the tailor as of the financier ; the difference between sauce maitre d'hôtel and sauce piquante is as well known to the water-carrier as to the countess ; and wine is the beverage of the peer and the paviour. A remarkably unpractised palate might *discern* between a ragout by Véfour and a ragout by

Richefeu: still both are ragouts, and that is some consolation to the man whom necessity compels to patronise the New California. Undoubtedly every Parisian eats as good a dinner as he can possibly pay for; and undoubtedly he likes to have as many entremets, desserts, and legumes as he can possibly procure for the sum he destines for his refreshment. These facts account for the extraordinary efforts made by restaurateurs to supply a long list of delicacies at extraordinarily low tariffs. Imagine seven dishes and a bottle of wine for one shilling and eightpence! Think of a twopenny ragout! No wonder that the shop boys of the Rue de Seine talk glibly of truffles—and have no great veneration for a Mayonnaise!

The natural love of variety in the kitchen (which, by the way, is a most economic love) has its remarkable illustrations. Every kind of attraction is added to the dinner table. One man is known to give his guests good things, which his neighbour basely places among the supplements; another provides damask serviettes; the huge slices of melon are the baits thrown out by a third. A word on supplements. These are the tormentors of the economic diner of the Palais Royal. He is attracted to one magnificent establishment by the announcement in gold letters over the doorway, that he may dine for the moderate charge of two francs. This dinner, he is told, includes wine, soup, two dishes, two vegetables, and dessert. He walks briskly into the establishment, and selects his two dishes from the voluminous carte. He is told that any two of the dishes therein described may be

had for his two franc dinner, with some few exceptions. These exceptions are called supplements, and include all the dishes which a man of taste would select. Thus, the cheap diner of Paris has a horror of supplements, and can tell you the restaurants where melon is in the obnoxious list—and where it is free. A story is current in the Palais Royal of an inexperienced provincial, who went into one of these two franc restaurants, and chose a supplementary soup, two supplementary dishes, supplementary vegetables, and a supplementary dessert. On offering his two francs for his entertainment, he discovered that his account amounted to five francs and a half!

Again, the Barrières are the chosen resort of gentlemen of refined taste and limited capital. Here meat and other food is cheaper than within the octroi gates, and consequently here the cheap restaurateurs hold out attractions to their customers with which their town competitors have some difficulty to keep pace. More wine is to be had without than within the Barrières for a given sum even now—in spite of the tax which the Imperial Government has lately levied upon the vendors of the Banlieue. The reputation of the Banlieue for cheapness must be kept up, or how can those saloons with twelve hundred couverts be filled? how can the conjurors count upon their bagful of sous? how can the gaily-dressed coco merchants hope to get rid of their daily barrel of liquorice water? Luxury is a Parisian necessity; the workman cares for it equally with the rentier: and thus it is the constant duty of the shopkeepers to provide glittering rooms of entertainment, dazzling

jewellery, shining cloth, and patent leather boots—all at the cheapest possible rate. The Docks de la Toilette and the Belle Jardinière deck the workman out for his fête days in imitation of his master; the jewellers, in whose shops all is certainly not gold that glitters, provide his wife with substantial electro earrings. In the same way young men of moderate income ride cheap horses to the Bois de Boulogne on Sundays with the air of so many Rothschilds, but the pockets of so many clerks. In the same way the tradesman's wife must, on great days, be dressed like the richest of her customers. This tendency to ape the manners of the rich is caricatured in many lively songs just now; and you may hear the wild students of the Quartier Latin, over their burning punch, sing songs of a melancholy nature about the grisette having become a lorette. They remember the time when she wore her snow-white cap, and was content with the pretty kerchief that neatly covered her shoulders; and they vehemently express their preference for these adornments, before the flowery bonnet and stately shawl to which she now aspires. Very cleverly have the tradesmen of Paris adapted themselves to this state of society; and in no department of Parisian industry is this talent more discernible than in the popular eating-houses of the capital.

The Palais Royal restaurants had become known for their cheapness and for their tricks. The comic papers had been very facetious at their expense. Doubts had been loudly expressed as to the exact tribe of the animal kingdom in which the rabbits of these establishments could be fairly classed: the beef

of these localities had been jocularly connected with the mortality of Paris horseflesh. Gentlemen to whom variety in dining was an absolute necessity, but who could not stand up against the mots of the Charivari, began to beat about for establishments offering equal variety at similar prices. Le Rosbif was not distinguished: Vachette's was too expensive: the Barrières were too far off, and were not sufficiently genteel. This dilemma was seen by a select number of gentlemen, who, taking advantage of the law of Société en Commandite, banded themselves together to have a grand Dîner de Paris. These were gentlemen who could not condescend to the seventy-five centimes restaurants near the Ecole de Medicine; who stickled,—at once, for variety and gentility.

The idea of the great Paris dinner where bankers might dine without compromising their dignity, and dine well; and where at the same time their genteel clerks might have the satisfaction of taking their liqueurs and eating their hors d'œuvres with some of the most conspicuous dandies of the Chaussée d'Antin, was essentially good. It grasped the feeling of the genteel classes of Paris: it pandered to the general wish to make twenty sous look like a five franc piece. It has succeeded. On the Boulevards, exactly opposite the Rue Vivienne, the visitor will perceive the sign of the great Paris Dinner, easily. Under the sign he may also perceive a large black tablet, with a long bill of fare chalked upon it. Here is the bill of the day—the dinner which genteel Paris is to eat. There is no distinction: the banker, if he dine here, *must eat the same dinner as that upon which his*

clerk regales himself. Absolute equality in dining is established. The dinner consists of a choice soup, excellent hors d'œuvres, two or three savoury dishes, ice and dessert; and a bottle of good ordinaire. All these things are excellent of their kind—and connoisseurs have declared that the cuisine which serves up the great Paris Dinner is the best public establishment of the kind in the capital. Visitors who have read the great bill of fare for the day—if it please them—will walk down the great arcade, turn to the left, and ascend the wide staircase which leads to the great dinner. They will be met on the first landing by an official, who will enquire whether or not they will preface the great repast with a few oysters. But the visitors should be on their guard, for the oysters form a supplement—the only supplement to the great dinner. On the first floor they will see a lady sitting in a little office ready to receive them. Here they will take their tickets—paying for them the moderate sum of three francs and a half. Armed with these tickets they have an absolute right to the great dinner, to the attentions of waiters, to all the comforts of the establishment, without disbursing another liard!

The scene, as they enter the first of the suite of rooms in which genteel Paris is cheerfully dining, is effective. As far as the eye can reach, groups in the various stages of the great dinner, may be seen. Down the centre of the rooms are large stands, upon which thousands of plates and glasses are stacked—here and there relieved by glistening heaps of silver. Crowds of waiters hurry to and fro, and call to others who have various delicacies in their arms. These bearers have

lost their own identity, and appear to be known only by the burden they carry. That tall, serious man, is not Jean—but a *hors d'œuvre*; that squat, excited little fellow, used to be Antoine, but he has sunk to a *salmi*!

The instant visitors make their appearance to partake of the great dinner, a polite gentleman advances to guide them to a vacant table. Each table is covered with shining plate, and provided with damask cloths;—considered a great luxury in Paris restaurants. He is no sooner seated than the soup is before him; the soup has been no sooner removed, than the smiling *hors-d'œuvre* makes his appearance, and with a silver fork in his hand, and a huge tray of savoury things resting upon the length of his left arm, asks Monsieur whether he will take some caviar, some sardines, or some sausage. The rest of the dinner is served with equal promptitude. As there is only one bill of fare for the hundreds who are dining around, there is no waiting—no excuse that the Chateaubriand takes a long time, or that twenty minutes are always allowed for a Charlotte. A glance at the company satisfies the most fastidious gentleman that he is dining with some very distinguished people. Here are some well-known financiers, some first-rate *feuilletonistes*, some very fashionable aristocratic sprigs, some Englishmen known to put up either at Meurice's or the Hôtel Wagram. There are ladies too, and ladies seen only at very select places. Truly, the fastidious visitor thinks, here the gentlemen who started this cheap fashionable dinner have hit the public taste to a nicety. And, in reserving to the holders of a certain

number of shares the privilege of dining here free of cost, they hit upon an expedient for raising the necessary capital, which proves them excellent men of business. There are one or two visitors well known as shareholders, and it is amusing to mark the deference with which the *hors-d'œuvre* bows to them, and the graceful recognition with which the *squat salmi* receives them.

Considering the handsome rooms; considering the damask table-linen; considering the bright plate; considering the excellent attendance; considering the remarkably good cookery; considering the very genteel company; and above all, considering the price,—this great Paris dinner is, in every sense of the word, a remarkable dinner. It is said that eight hundred genteel people daily share this opinion. But the Palais Royal—not to be outdone by the Boulevards—has huge posters out of a European dinner—at five sous a head less than the price charged by its rival: and the Société de Gastronomie has its Grand Dinner de l'Exposition, where discontented shareholders may eat away their scrip in salads and sautés.

The Banlieue prices tempt those unhappy people who are compelled to forego appearances, and, regardless of the coat of their neighbour at the table, to dine where they can. This class is even more numerous than the genteel class with slender capital. Many adventurous men have established colossal dining halls outside the Barrières to attract this crowd of hungry people. It is of importance, therefore, to exhibit, in contrast to the remarkable dinner of the Boulevards, that remarkable dinner to be had at the Barrière du

Mont Parnasse, by economical working men, broken-down political enthusiasts, sufferers from a slack trade, ruined spendthrifts, and other people upon whom fortune has turned her back. Even here, where the struggle of life is marked upon every forehead, that love of dining well, which pervades the Boulevards, is to be traced. The working man, rather than dine off one substantial dish, will club with his neighbour that they may have three half dishes between them. Opposite the Barrière the visitor will notice an immense house, lighted up from the ground floor to the third floor; this is Richefeu's New California! Here thousands of people dine daily. These thousands consist of working men in prosperous circumstances, students who are reduced in cash, and others to whom some sense of the conventionalities of life are dear. Here the tables are covered with cloths—not very white it is true, but still they are cloths. Here the huge pieces of meat, tastefully grouped about the doorways, allure passers-by; but it is whispered that all this splendid meat is exhibited as a bait, and on the morrow sold to the butchers. But it is not with the remarkable dinner to be eaten at Richefeu's that we have to do; this has already been described. There is a remarkable dinner, however, established by the ex-mayor of the commune, which forms an excellent contrast to the great dinner already described; and it is to this dinner we shall proceed.

The way to our second remarkable dinner is to the right of the Barrière, and then down a lane which branches off to the left from the outer Boulevard. This lane is flanked on the right by a series of coffee

stalls, and a little way beyond, to the left, are rows of deal tables stretching across a wide square space. On a fine evening these tables are occupied by hundreds of diners, all talking, shouting, singing, and calling lustily to their companions. Amid the crowd a few black coats may be distinguished: but the great majority of guests are in blouses. Men are rushing hither and thither with dishes of meat and vegetables, huge bars of bread, and capacious brown jugs of wine. Let us pass through the crowd, avoiding, if possible, the gravy dropping from the dishes which the guests are carrying about, in the wildest confusion. As we approach the great house, the evidences of a very remarkable dinner crowd upon us. In an outhouse is a huge copper filled with a dark green liquid, over which a man is washing enormous stacks of crockery that are pushed, from time to time, through a hole in the wall, by the waiters. At his feet is a little mountain of leaden spoons; and, as he withdraws a dozen plates now and then from the pool of green liquid before him, the emerald drops fall upon them from the points of his elbows. We had unpleasant suspicions as to the ultimate destination of this green liquid; it possibly turned up on the morrow as purée.

The first room we reached was the kitchen. Here the steam from the meats, the odours of the various preparations, and the collected perfumes of the fighting, crowding, noisy visitors, made an atmosphere which we did not enjoy. Half the room was enclosed by an angular, solid, metal counter, securely railed round to keep the guests off. And the railing was necessary, for a crowd of men pressed against it

impatiently, shouting their wants, and stretching forth their hands to grasp the next dish offered. Behind the counter rested huge copper stewpans, filled with various meats and vegetables; and in the central place stood capacious kettles of soup and other preparations, attended by cooks, who, with their bare arms and glowing faces, were giving active attention to the fires. We soon singled out the proprietor of the establishment. He was a short, stout man, of venerable appearance. He wore spectacles, and was dressed in the honoured white of a culinary artist. He had a most voracious crowd before him, and forty hands were continually stretched out within a few inches of his nose. He was serving out gibelottes, or stewed rabbits, at six sous per dish. It was a study to watch his keen eye, and to note the dexterity with which, as he extended the dish over the heads of the crowd, he selected those hands which contained the required money. His principle was, the gibelotte in one hand and the money in the other.

That guest was very clever who kept clear of the gravy. At every turn he met a ragout, or faced a gibelotte. Wildly and cheerily the blouses were skipping about, with their big thumbs dipped in the sauce of the purchased ragout, or their litre of wine in one hand and their bar of bread in the other.

The wine bar was opposite the railed-off kitchen; and here were men pouring the "rich droppings of the grape" into the brown measures. It might be had at ten sous a litre—a litre being, it should be observed, more than an English quart measure—or at five sous the choppine. And this price was considered frightfully

high by the guests—the cost being, in prosperous times, as low as six sous and three sous. This wine was not bad—that is, it was not spirituous; but it had undoubtedly contracted a most intimate alliance with Seine water. Having been hustled about in the kitchen, we made our way through a crowd of blouses chattering at the doorway, into an immense room, where two or three hundred people were seated at long, low, deal tables, eating the dishes they had purchased in the kitchen. Every variety of the working-classes of Paris had here its type, even to the chiffonier. There were, too, haggard men in worn-out coats, buttoned tightly across shirtless breasts; groups of children with greedy eyes, and poor fellows sleeping with their heads upon the table beside the empty four-sous dish! We took our seat amid the crowd, near a poor man who had three little children with him. His crape explained his story. He was a widower, in a terrible struggle with the world, and with three children at his heels. He had before him three two-sous dishes of vegetables, and a substantial bar of bread. This meagre fare he portioned out to the children so tenderly and kindly, that they seemed comforted and even cheerful in all the misery of the place. This little group did not seem to hear the shouting, the laughing, and the hissing that was going on about them, nor to notice the hawkers who were shuffling up and down the narrow alleys between the tables, trying to sell all kinds of cheap articles to the diners.

The hawkers make a curious feature of this remarkable dinner. The majority of them are

second-hand clothes sellers. One of them offered us a white waistcoat for one franc, with the assurance that it had never been worn; another was eager to sell a cap for fifteen sous. There were also hawkers of little delicacies not included in the culinary resources of the establishment. These consisted of oyster and shrimp sellers, who shouted along the alleys; and tobacco merchants sold a substantial packet of tobacco (made from the ends of cigars found in the streets by the chiffoniers) for the small sum of two sous. Still the noise did not interfere with the appetites of the guests. The avidity with which some of the sturdy workmen emptied their dish was almost frightful to behold. It did not matter to them that the establishment declined to provide plates, but forced the diners to eat from their dishes—that the mustard was in tumblers—that there were no table-cloths—that the waiters wore blouses, and had coarse canvas aprons before them, and clouts of the most repulsive aspect in their hands wherewith to wipe down the boards as the bones and grease accumulated upon them. They ate away doggedly, and unceremoniously dismissed the hawker who was bold enough to disturb them with his wares. It was eight o'clock when we entered this remarkable dining-room, and still the guests choked up every part of it.

Even here, where the miseries of life may be seen copiously illustrated, the finesse of Vachette's is copied. To get two or three things for dinner, even here the diners club together, and order for one—that is, take for one, and divide dishes. Thus two workmen taking,

one a four-sous dish, and one a three-sous dish, get two courses for three sous and a half each. They also share a litre of wine, which is ten sous, and a four sous bar of bread. Altogether, such a dinner therefore costs each workman ten sous and a half—a farthing under sixpence! Certainly this is a remarkable dinner;—as welcome to the poor, who avail themselves of it by thousands, as is the great Paris Dinner to the genteel, whose appetite has been cultivated too highly for the capacity of their pockets.

This remarkable dinner finished, the workman takes his coffee and *chasse-café* as well as the banker. In the lane leading from the great dining house are coffee stalls, where the dinner coffee may be enjoyed for one sou, an extra one being charged for brandy. And then, his pipe in his mouth, the diner strolls off to some ball close at hand, where he can dance away the cares of the day for the moderate charge of two sous per country dance.

All people who visit Paris should see these two remarkable dinners. The visitor may eat the great dinner with considerable satisfaction; but we must confess we did not taste the ragouts of the *Barrière du Mont Parnasse*, although we were assured that they were fortifiante; just as the wine is considered sustaining—more sustaining, say all Paris workmen, than beer.

Galignani amused its readers last autumn with estimates of the lowest rates at which respectable people may be lodged and fed in Paris. These estimates should not be relied on.

Vulgar people may live at a reasonable price; but

people who have a proper horror of *ordinaire*, cannot possibly exist in the French capital without spending more than they would disburse in a "respectable" London hotel. As these statements are likely to prevent many people who *can* drink *ordinaire* and lodge *out* of the Rue Rivoli, from visiting Paris, I think it is well to expose their falsity. The truth is, that if an Englishman be determined to lodge only at the hotel where *Galignani* lies upon the coffee-room table; to patronise in Paris only the shops recommended in *Galignani's* list of tradesmen, to ride only in a *remise*, he will undoubtedly be under the necessity of performing that peculiar operation known as "paying the Piper." Now every man has his ambition. Some men love to be robbed; to wander through a foreign city with the hand of every native rascal in their pockets. In every city of the continent, there dwells a flight of very black crows that swoops upon the hapless visitor. These crows live and fatten upon their successive crops of victims. They may be seen hovering about railway stations, throwing cards into travelling carriages, waiting in coffee-rooms for new arrivals, or petitioning for subscriptions for local building purposes. Cologne cathedral, for instance, has perhaps, fattened more public beggars than any other edifice in Europe. Well, it would appear that *Galignani* aspires to be the organ of this rapacious party. Thus it is very strong indeed about respectable hotels. No respectable person can get a dinner in Paris under three or four francs. Other nameless folk may fill their leathern stomachs with certain food which will

enable their questionable anatomy to perform the vital functions; but no person, who has ever had a gig kept, by even the remotest relation, can possibly still the cravings of his appetite for a sum less than three francs and a-half. In publishing this great fact, *Galignani* appeals to the gigism of England. To dine in Paris, for a less sum than the respectable sum, is infamous. No, far worse, it is vulgar. Paris is therefore, a place to be visited by the rich only. People below a certain stamp may stay away; for they will neither deal with the shops where English is spoken (only that the English may be cheated), nor dine at the *Maison Dorée*.

Unanswered, *Galignani's* statement of living in Paris is calculated to do great harm. It might prevent thousands from visiting the Universal Exhibition this year: it might weaken the great social lesson which, we trust, this year will teach. I therefore beg most distinctly and emphatically to declare—and declare from experience—that the prices quoted by *Galignani* are those which *raw* visitors pay. It is possible to live comfortably, decently, in Paris at one-third less cost than in London. If visitors of limited means will not look about for themselves, but will still consent to be hustled into an expensive hotel by an officious touter, they must take the consequences. Yet there are many good hotels in Paris—French hotels where few English penetrate—at which visitors will find themselves comfortably lodged and excellently fed for seven francs a-day—even for five francs. These hotels are neither in the *Rue de Rivoli* nor in the *Rue de la Paix*. Yet they are in good thoroughfares,

and are the resort of honest French country folk. I could enumerate many such houses were it necessary : but it is not. To all people who know Paris the fact is patent. Melancholy pictures, indeed, are the hapless English, who may be seen wandering about the Boulevards or the Palais Royal : paying any figure asked : eating indifferent dinners at fabulous prices : disbursing enough for *bougies* to support an honest family : and scampering back on their road to the northern railway, calculating, by the way, the costliness of a week in Paris.

When I state—and state after careful calculation, upon ascertained data—that a man may visit Paris and return to London, having been away eight days, for the sum of five pounds, I affirm a fact which I am fully prepared to prove. Such a traveller shall lodge at a good hotel, see all that is worth seeing in the French capital, and be deposited at London-bridge for the money stated. He certainly will not have enjoyed the companionship of a commissionaire every day : he will not have lodged, perhaps, in the English quarter ;—but he will have seen more of the real elements of the French capital than many a gent who has whisked away his twenty pounds in half as many days, at Meurice's.

Not long ago there was a great outcry throughout England for hotel reform. It was suddenly discovered that hotel proprietors were the most rapacious class of dealers in existence. The outcry even took the form of a provisionally registered company. And then the affair, I believe, dropped. Hotel proprietors resumed their time-honoured practices :—travellers

consented once more to be fleeced. Now, this end of a fair outcry was sad:—but what can be said of the reaction in favour of hotel abuses, which, it would appear, is to be attempted in Paris? Not only are dear hotels to be supported, but visitors to cheap hotels are to be stigmatised as wandering brutes who care not for decencies in their lodgings, nor for wholesomeness in their diet. If no respectable person in Paris can dine for less than three francs, how many thousands of disreputable people there must be in that capital!

Well, the very genteel will perfectly acquiesce in this conclusion:—Paris—that is, genteel Paris—is a very limited place; and *Galignani* represents the genteel English of Paris—the English who hold that every dinner must be bad which does not cost a respectable price. But let us all hope that new people are on their way to the French capital; people who will mix unaffectedly with its population, decline to be swindled by its rascals, and who will even—should their pockets be shallow—enjoy a room somewhere in the vicinity of the Barrières. If I am not much mistaken, thousands of Englishmen are at this time anticipating a cheap visit to Paris in the summer, when the Palais de l'Industrie has opened its doors to the world! To these I would say emphatically, a cheap visit may be enjoyed at any time in Paris. Cheap hotels are plentiful—cheap and wholesome dinners abound—amusements and omnibuses are cheap—touters and their patrons alone are dear. These are luxuries which any reasonable man may dispense with:—for, if there be an ever-recurring

nuisance in continental travel, it assuredly is the touters, who never leave the traveller's elbow—who settle like locusts upon all public monuments—who are paid percentages to lead the unwary to dear shops—and who perpetually grumble and ask for a little more, when they have received double or treble the money legitimately earned. Let us hope, however, that honest caterers for public support will be established in Paris. Travel is cheap enough; hotel accommodation—that is, the French hotel accommodation known to Englishmen—remains dear. Now, I anticipate from the very genteel statement of *Galignani*, with regard to living in Paris, that it will have the very contrary effect to that which I am afraid was wished. It will, in my opinion, call up a new class of hotel proprietors, who will be content with fair profits, who will not despise the economic traveller, nor seek clandestinely to thrust their hands into the pocket of every customer.

I trust I have written enough to re-assure economic excursionists. They may find cheap and good board and lodging in Paris at all times, although such board and lodging is not generally advertised in the columns of *Galignani*. I should be glad to see English excursionists not only at the Diner de l'Exposition, but also at Richefeu's.

CHAPTER V.

FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE COOKS.

ONCE, at least, in every year, that highly important and well-considered part of the Parisian population habitually confined to Parisian kitchens, enjoys the chief emoluments of a fair. When the fiery fingers of autumn approach the splendid foliage of the forest of St. Germain; when the melon season of Paris is in its full glory; when Tortoni's ice-house is nearly empty; when English barristers are arriving in rapid succession at Meurice's Hotel; when English-French may be heard in every walk of Versailles; and when fashionable Parisians are at their country seats—the cooks of this agreeable capital, emerge from their fragrant kitchens, put out their charcoal fires, divest themselves of their white livery, and—to show their sense of the important matter impending—wash their faces!

Monsieur Victor, the greasy gentleman who produces the far-famed delicacies of the Bon Voyageur Restaurant—a cheap establishment just on the right side of the Barrière de l'Etoile—is, usually, a very modest official, dressed in a suit of questionable white; whose officious thumbs are his tasters all day

long. Thus, usually, M. Victor is a man of business; but look at him on the first day of the benefit in honour of his class, and you shall perceive a very exquisitely dressed gentleman. A hat that glistens in the autumn sunlight; gloves that fit exquisitely; boots that Hoby might have made! With becoming dignity M. Victor leaves the Bon Voyageur on the first morning of his benefit, and seats himself in the omnibus which will take him, for six sous, to the terminus of the St. Germain's railway. But he is affable, even under these splendid circumstances. From opposite quarters of Paris, other gentlemen of M. Victor's honoured profession, arrive at the St. Germain's railway station in omnibuses. Many of them are attended by companions of less pretension—companions who, when their hearts are light and they are inflamed with wine, hope to reach the dignity of the gentlemen they follow. But this daring ambition which, uncurbed, might o'erleap itself, and end in a spoiled Charlotte, is properly checked, and the bees of the scullery are kept in becoming subjection.

Deferentially attended by their obsequious satellites, the artists of Parisian kitchens take their places on the tops of the "*wagons*" bound for St. Germain's. Here, the trains have outside places, exactly like those fixed upon the roofs of London omnibuses; and these places are popular among the holiday-makers who smoke. Very cautiously the engine-driver conducts the cooks of Paris to St. Germain's—past huge square houses devoted to the suburban consumption of brandy, barley-water, and currant-water—past vineyards of luxurious growth—past a forest, gay with

autumn's lively colours—to the palace of St. Germain's. The station is within a hundred yards of the palace gates.

Built upon the highest ground in the neighbourhood, this palace commands a magnificent prospect. An Englishman, walking along the stately terrace in front of the building, must recall vividly, the associations which belong to it, and which are bound up with the history of his country. Considered as the house of exiled greatness, it is a most pleasant refuge. It has all the gay appearance of a splendid French hotel; there is nothing of the prison, and very little of the citadel about it. Peppery little French soldiers of the line are grouped about its entrances, and fiercely warn off the intruding visitor; therefore, it is not easy—if it were desirable—to describe its interior attractions.

But, the scene before the railway station is sufficiently gay to make any visitor arriving on the holiday of the cooks, very unceremoniously turn his back upon the Stuart's home in exile, and avail himself of the omnibus accommodation offered to him by the most loquacious of conductors. And then he is whirled away at a rapid rate through the narrow streets of the town. Flags are displayed everywhere; they hang from hundreds of windows; they are raised upon high poles in every open space: they flaunt from every stall. The prolific bird who has, of late, produced so many golden eaglets in France, has handsomely strewn his burnished young hereabouts, and they glisten from every high place.

Against every wall are huge placards, headed—

"*Fête des Loges*," conspicuously parading the fact, that in the depth of the forest, visitors will find innumerable "kitchens in the open air." To the unearthly music of a Parisian driver, we rumble heavily through the streets—are duly stared at from every gateway, and find ourselves soon on a broad road cut deep into the forest of St. Germain. The road is gay with holiday-makers. Grisettes, hooked upon the arm of broad-trousered students, are walking rapidly to the scene of action. Women laden with gingerbread; vendors of coco, wearing cocked hats, and carrying the gayest fountains; fellows of determined aspect, in blouses, whom we should not like to meet in the forest after dark; shrivelled old ladies wearing snow-white caps, and the bluest of blue stockings; lovers not intent upon a dinner of mere love; sturdy porters laden with melons—all are advancing rapidly into the depths of this noble forest. Far away in the shade of the trees are pairs flirting desperately; here and there are pic-nic parties laughing over a banquet laid out at the road-side. It is a long ride to the fair. Presently we hear the braying of the hoarsest conceivable trumpets; and, of course, the most vigorous drumming. A little exercise of patience brings us to a square open place, crowded with every description of vehicle, and gay on all sides with the tricolor rag. The drums are rolling far away in the depths of the forest; the trumpets are braying close to our ears; gingerbread merchants are loud in their assertion that their several offers are the cheapest in the fair.

The booths are all pitched upon some open ground, nearly surrounded by the grand timber of the forest.

These booths are built somewhat after the fashion of English booths, and are remarkable to a stranger chiefly for the odd collection of merchandise they contain—a collection usually presided over by a very solemn man, wearing a ferocious beard, who generally walks up and down behind his counter, his hands dipped into the capacious pockets of his capacious trousers, calling aloud at intervals to the passers-by to patronise the *boutique à six sous* ! The attractions of his booth include soaps of all colours and patterns ; heaps of fragrant pastilles ; pipes of all descriptions, and wooden pipe-cases ; baby dolls bandaged, unfortunately after the fashion of French babies in the flesh, and slung up by a hook to the counter ; drums of all sizes ; gorgeous jewellery made of the purest copper, generally pretty in design ; acres of the darkest gingerbread, for the most tempting lumps of which the visitor is invited to gamble ; chocolate most fantastically shaped ; toy helmets, and swords for warriors in the bud. Before this show fierce military men are grouped ; blouses are lounging lazily ; here smart, shrill-voiced grisettes ; there, grave old ladies surrounded by clamorous grandchildren, and attended by prim nurses. You may see a tall cuirassier, to all appearances seriously, try the tone of a six sous trumpet—have a turn at the game for gingerbread—and walk off the triumphant purchaser of two chocolate whistles.

When out for a day's holiday all French men and French women are children ; and this is a very good and a very pleasant quality that they have. Thus, when we advanced into the heart of the

fair, we heard the ringing laughter of the people who were patronising the roundabouts. Upon one round-about wooden horses were dangling, three abreast, at regular spaces ; and the proprietor was inviting the spectators to occupy the vacant saddles, before he proceeded to turn the machine. Gravely enough an old gentleman advanced, and politely assisted by the proprietor, took his seat upon a wooden charger ; he was hardly settled in his place before a cavalry corporal, at least six feet high, proceeded to occupy the next saddle ;—and thus the places were rapidly filled. As the machine went round, it was curious to notice the people who were enjoying the fun of it. Old ladies of sixty, children of various ages, a sombre man in spectacles, laughing students, bearded blouses, were all grouped in the revolving circle, and were all decidedly enjoying the sport. From this curious picture we turned to the other sights of the *Fête des Loges*.

We counted amongst these, five or six distinct giantesses ; one lady with a beard ; two piebald boys (portraits of whom were exhibited, and looked like paintings half cleaned, displayed by picture revivers) ; a magician who effected the instant disappearance of a horse and two boys ; skittles to which the visitor was tempted by the prospect of winning fowls or pigeons ! And then, attracted by savoury odours distinctly perceptible, we sought that quarter of the fair devoted exclusively to the benefit of the cooks. Here were the kitchens in the open air—all pitched in the shade of the noble forest trees. We recognised M. Victor at once, although he had doffed his suit of

black, and was now in the famed livery of Soyer. His fire was of charcoal, and was thrown against a huge, upright, smooth-faced stone. Over this, two or three horizontal spits extended, each about two yards in length, and loaded with incongruous delicacies. One spit had been driven through not less than nine fowls, which were all broiling in a row; upon another, about twenty pigeons were impaled; a third had been forced through a substantial joint of veal:—that great Parisian luxury! At one side were copper vessels, all steaming and sending forth most fragrant odours; at the other, a huge cauldron of soup was bubbling. Behind this kitchen (which was further remarkable for the stacks of melons, the yards of bread, and the colossal lumps of butter lying about it) was a tent, decorated, of course, with tricolored flags, in which were three long tables ready spread for visitors who might be tempted to dine, by the savoury exhalations of the open air kitchen.

As M. Victor proceeded with his important business—as he cut those potatoes into the thinnest conceivable little strips—or, with a hand at once delicate and decided, larded two or three very remarkable livers, he occasionally conceded a reply to some visitor's question. But, generally, the holiday-makers who crowded about him, had a respect too serious and too profound for his art, to disturb him at his labours. We left him trussing a fowl, and pursued our walk among the kitchens. They were all contrived after M. Victor's model, and were all in full work. At one, a sturdy professor was gravely rolling out an immense lump of paste; at another, a comic cook presided. This artist

was evidently engaged rather for his facetious, than for his culinary power. He had a sharp sally for every visitor who addressed him; and, when we first saw him, was brandishing a fowl in the faces of a laughing multitude. In the long tent behind him, various groups of people were going through the various stages of a French dinner. Some were at the soup-stage, others were consuming huge slices of melon to refresh the palate, for the enjoyment of subsequent fricassees. The ground was strewn in every direction, with the hard shells of innumerable melons, and at every turn, people were incorporating prodigious lumps of this refreshing fruit. The cooks were evidently making money; all other attractions of the fair seemed to be subservient to theirs. Grave old gentlemen whisked about on the roundabouts to get an appetite for M. Victor; grisettes only delayed their dinner to a late hour, that they might have a sharp appetite for soup cooked in the open air. He would have incurred any grisette's heaviest displeasure, who had offered her on this gay day, the choicest fare cooked in an ordinary kitchen.

And thus, before the balls opened that evening, in the forest, the cooks had realised considerable benefits from their annual open-air cookery.

The respect paid to Monsieur the Cook by the holiday-makers is very noticeable; his manner of proceeding is watched with intense delight; the gradual transition of very ugly lumps of meat into exquisite fricassees—not one morsel of anything being lost—is an intense study to many elderly gentlemen who spend nearly all the day before the kitchens in the

open air. It is in his power of adapting everything to a savoury and nutritious account that the Parisian cook prides himself. You think he is going to throw all that grease, which is falling into a huge trencher from his roast, into some wasteful grease-pot; wait awhile, and you shall see it re-appear in the congenial shape of a wholesome and refreshing soup. That heap of mangled cold fowls yonder is by no means destined to be set aside as waste; they will make their second appearance, very shortly, under some dexterous disguise. As for that cold beef, its adventures will be of the most complicated nature. It is now simply a very indifferent joint of what Monsieur Victor and his brethren call *ros bif*. But, presently, it will be *Beef à la mode*; a juicy morsel will be dexterously cut off for a *Châteaubriand aux Pommes*; then it will be dexterously turned to *Beef sauce tomate*; part of it will be reserved for the companionship of mushrooms; and, at last, its scattered remnants will turn up in a general *fricassee*, and its bones will be broiled for the universally popular *bouillon*. Had that same joint of *ros bif* fallen into the hands of an English cook, half of it would have been wasted; two-thirds of the fat would have found their way to the grease-pot, and the bones would have been cast into the dusthole!

Give M. Victor a few vegetables, any meat—he is indifferent as to the joint—a saucepan, and a little charcoal fire, and he will serve you up a most satisfactory and a most wholesome little dinner. The materials which, in England, would produce only the most unpalatable food, become, in his dexterous hands, the foundations

of little dishes of the most various descriptions. Yet M. Victor is not expensive. He laughs at all he hears of English cookery, and wonders how masters can support its extravagance. And M. Victor is right. Our cooks should take an easy drive hither; and, watching these kitchens in the open air, derive much benefit therefrom. Especially to the English working man, would this experience be useful. His wife, on a moderate calculation, throws away one-third of her family's food. She has no culinary resources. It never enters her head to turn every scrap of food, every bone that comes within her reach, every crust of bread, to palatable account. And thus the teaching of common things which has been lately talked of, should include, as a most important branch of popular education, the economy of the kitchen. To teach the young idea how to cook is to do a great social good, undoubtedly. There are more showy accomplishments; fair fingers may be seen to better advantage than when partially buried in a light crust—but the light crust has something to do with the light heart, and the kitchen strongly influences the happiness of the parlour.

And so may the cooks have a good benefit yearly in the forest shade of St. Germain for many years to come! That they deal with a very remarkable quantity of raw produce is very evident, from statistics of the Parisian dinner table, which I may notice before turning to other, and perhaps less interesting subjects. And really the annual consumption of food in that capital, the energies of which are greatly devoted to the progress of gastronomic science, is

likely to startle even the most imaginative spectator. When the mind recalls the long galleries of dining-rooms in the Palais Royal;—the salon with a thousand columns;—the restaurants of the boulevards;—the cremeries which abound in every side street;—and the hotels which offer tempting tables d'hôtes, it becomes almost impossible to form even an approximate idea of the number of chickens, the droves of cattle, the sacks of haricots, and the firkins of butter which these establishments annually consume. Stir the great Paris *pot-au-feu* for any given number of years into some mighty cauldron—(in the lake, for instance, which has been lately hollowed out in the Bois de Bologne)—and the flocks of fowl, the preserves of game, the mighty droves of sheep, and the multitude of calves, would stagger even the most resolute man. All this life would be hemmed in amid fields of cauliflower and asparagus;—stray spots would be choked up with endive;—and goodly sacks of truffles and chestnuts would be near the turkeys. In a scene like this, the mind of a Savarin, or a Vatel, or a Soyer might run riot:—fabulous estimates might be framed, and the hearty diner might be led to a state of self-glorification before the tremendous *pot-au-feu* into which he was wont to dip no very shallow spoon.

But from the realms of imagination the matter-of-fact people of the present time have been permitted to extricate themselves. We know, to a chicken, what Paris annually drops into her enormous cauldron. The statist has done his work even in the Paris poultry market; and not an egg has escaped his

observant eye. No man in the French capital eats an omelette that has not, in its primitive form of eggs, been counted. Now, I propose to give the reader a few facts which the before-mentioned statist has gleaned. These facts, as I warn him, are startling, but, I believe, may be fully relied upon.

And first of the meat, which, once in every four-and-twenty hours, is cast into the Paris pot-au-feu. The statist, holding his breath the while, and firmly clenching his teeth, records the death of 200 oxen, 250 calves, 290 pigs, and 1200 sheep, *per diem*, to be cast into the Paris cauldron. Yes, every four-and-twenty hours, this number of animals is cut up by the knife and fork of Paris. This calculation, we are reminded, does not include the "hosts of the gutter," which are transformed into gibelottes, nor the horses which do man their last service in the shape of "biftecks." Having mastered these wonderful facts—marvelled at the substantial nature of this enormous *pièce de résistance*, the reader is requested to think of this meat surrounded by colossal mountains of cabbages, and by sacks of potatoes disposed in squadrons. We have here a very substantial course. Others follow in due order; for it should be known that Paris pays annually, fourteen millions of francs for poultry and game, and twelve millions of francs for fish and oysters. Here are materials enough for the great gourmand's second course. But the knife and fork is not laid aside—even now. It has other delicacies to discuss—for we have not yet touched upon the important subject of eggs. Paris, robbed for twenty-four hours of her proper supply of eggs, would

be in a state, I am afraid, of dangerous ferment. Thus the political power of poultry should be considered in any readjustment of the national constitution.

French fowls lay eggs, for Paris alone, to the annual value of ten millions of francs ; nor does this estimate appear excessive, when the contemplative mind grasps every hissing omelette that diffuses its savoury steam daily from every Paris house. Imagine, however, one enormous omelette, value 400,000*l.* It would resemble very closely a field of buttercups !

But Paris has not yet dined. We have discussed flesh, fowl, and eggs, but have not yet even touched upon the whipped creams—the savoury cheeses, which naturally follow. Spacious must be the dairy which supplies Paris with milk, cream, and cheese ! Its dimensions are not recorded ; but we are informed that cheeses are rolled out of it through the *barrières* of the French capital, to the annual value of three millions and a half of francs, or 140,000*l.* !

The Paris knife and fork now lie beside the dessert. Of the extent of this dessert we may give an idea, by calling the reader's attention to the *Quai du Mail*, where the *chasselas*, or white grapes, from *Fontainebleau* and *Thomery*, are deposited, generally in closely-packed baskets. Here the sentimentalist may wander, amid the pulpy fruit, still warm with the ripening kiss of autumn, and dream, till he would hardly wonder to bump against *Bacchus*, risen to contemplate a scene so dear to him. But assuredly the huckstering would ill accord with the *bacchanalian Spirit* ; the lively eye would grow dull—the purple lips would compress—the flushed cheek would pale.

No! the most adventurous poet strolling hereabouts would hardly venture to call up the joyous deity to breathe the atmosphere of the Quai du Mail. There is little sentiment in the business which is going forward; each yellow bunch has its price. Here then lies the Paris dessert—or rather the dessert which is eaten late in the autumn when peaches can be had only in brandy, or at an enormous figure. Yet even this temporary dessert includes 300,000 baskets of chasselas, the weight of which is 750,000 kilogrammes—the kilogramme being equivalent to two English pounds. In addition there are the raisins de bique—200,000 kilogrammes of which are annually added to the Parisian dessert. To sum up the question of grapes, it may be stated that the vineyards around the capital, place upon the dining tables of Paris, every ordinary year, no less than two million pounds of fruit. This estimate may appear large; but when we are reminded that it does not exceed an allowance of two pounds of grapes to each inhabitant annually, it loses the majestic proportions in which it first presented itself to us.

The foregoing statistics of the Paris pot-au-feu are not only interesting—they may be turned to useful account. We have arrived at conclusions as to the average consumption—per human stomach—of corn for every year. We are told that once in twelve months, each man incorporates 440 lbs. of corn; we know, to the last baby born, how many mouths every civilised country contains, and thus we arrive at a fair estimate of the quantity of corn the great human *family* requires. In the same way statistics of meat

and vegetables, and butter and cheese, although very homely—perhaps very dry—reading, have their solid, enduring use. By slow degrees some useful projects for the fair apportionment of the choice bits in the great pot-au-feu, may be eliminated; and thus, while I lightly touch upon the statistics of the materials upon which the Paris knife and fork are employed, I must be understood as fully appreciating the solid lesson that lies in each sum.

CHAPTER VI.

NEAR THE PANTHEON.

THE resident in Paris who does not live in the fashionable quarters thereof; whose purse compels him to exist upon the "*nourriture simple et fortifiante*" of a student's hotel, instead of paying daily visits to Vachette's, or even to the *Dîner de Paris*; generally chooses the neighbourhood of the Panthéon for his quarters. For hereabouts he may have the wildest kind of social liberty. He may wear the hat he pleases to adopt, without remark: he may give free vent to the exuberance of his fancy in the matter of trousers. Nobody will interfere with him, if he have a relish for a matutinal pipe in the Palace gardens close by. Having had his two *plâts* for breakfast, about ten, with his half bottle of *ordinaire*, he should be off to his business—perhaps to the dissecting-room of a hospital, or to the studio of his master. But the day is cloudless, and the white Panthéon stands out against the intensely blue sky, reminding him of a sketch by Roberts. On such a day the nausea of a dissecting-room, or the close atmosphere of a studio, is insupportable. To stroll

out, pipe in mouth, past the interminable book-stalls, crammed with yellow-covered books; to meet a friend, and then saunter into the Luxembourg gardens, is certainly a more pleasant proceeding. There is a laziness in the very air; it is impossible to do anything worth speaking about. And then, if the stroller be an artist, may he not, in his walk, study character? There are, unhappily, twenty different ways of reconciling the conscience to idleness. On some mornings of lassitude the artist rises with weak eyes; the medical student wakes with an unsteady hand; the writer jumps out of bed with the reflection that the brain wants relaxation and repose, like the body; the government official is disturbed from his sleep by the suggestion that a day in bed will strengthen his naturally delicate constitution, and that a medical certificate must be had; the singer's slumbers are disturbed by a sore throat. And thus we all cheat ourselves occasionally.

These mornings of self-deceit are, I fear, a little too frequent with the gentlemen who are supposed to study near the Panthéon. On such occasions they may be generally found grouped about the Luxembourg gardens—some reading *Le Mousquetaire* in the shade of the trimmed chestnut trees; others watching the evolutions of the soldiers in the long walk that stretches away from the Palace to the Observatoire. Here billiard matches are got up, and appointments made for the *Closerie des Lilacs*. Here may be seen excellent samples of the Paris student; from the beardless young fellow with his rough hat upon the back of his head, and his extremities cased in trousers fitting him

like gaiters; to the solemn student, with his dingy volume under his arm, and his spectacles upon his nose, and his cravat tied carelessly about his throat. Here, too, are groups of ladies knitting; and whole squadrons of bonnes, with infinite varieties of the Paris baby, crawling, and squeaking, and tottering, and tumbling about them. All the boys are little soldiers; and those young fellows who are not aspiring drummers are mimic generals.

To the serious observer, the recruits, parcelled out in detachments of six, and occupying the ground from the steps of the Palace gardens up to the gates of the Park, look sad specimens enough. As they make their first attempts to shoulder arms; as they receive the rough thrusts of the peppery little drilling sergeants; as they undergo the minute inspection of the commanding officer (who has a push for one, and an angry word for another, and a threat for a third), their set expression of feature gives to them a deadened look, that has something awful in it. Their eyes are fixed, looking forward; the head is held stiffly; the lips are motionless; and all volition appears to be here at an end. At the sergeant's word of command the arms are shouldered; then lowered; then the right hand is upon the cartouche-box; then the cartouche is lifted to the mouth, and inserted in the musket; then the ramrod is applied; and the bright rods rise and fall along the line with the precision of steam machinery; then the musket is again shouldered. And then those who have been in any way slow or awkward, are savagely reproved; then the officer makes a dash with his

sword at a musket dangling carelessly, or seizes a man's cap, and puts it jauntily upon his head as a soldier should wear it. All the men stand like statues, and appear so closely to resemble one another, that you wonder how they sort themselves, and recognise their companions when they are once dispersed. At a word, they presently fall on one knee (that which was observed encased in a leather band to preserve the scarlet trowsers from the dust) to receive a charge of cavalry; then they rise and advance one step at a time, with their bayonets pointed at an imaginary enemy, but in reality at a formidable row of laughing *bonnes* and delighted children. A drum rolls, and suddenly they stack their muskets; the rigidity of their faces is relaxed: and they skip away to join the crowd gathering about the band posted half way down the avenue.

Now they are playing all kinds of practical jokes with one another. Hats are knocked off; mock fights go on; unobserved pulls of the ears are given; and jokes are played even with the swords. Pipes are produced; tobacco is freely borrowed and as freely lent; clouds of smoke rise into the air; the officers unceremoniously light their cigarettes from their men's pipes; the corporals group together as the sergeants group together: and the lieutenants chatter apart, while a few privates hop about to the polka which the regimental band is playing. It is a scene of cheerful life. The officers, with their hands buried deep in their wonderfully-capacious scarlet trowsers, bulging from their remarkably small waists, laugh, and talk, and smoke, and forget the rigid military

look; ladies cluster about, talking lively things; students four abreast, and arm-in-arm, stroll round the large circle; and grisettes, in their snow-white caps, and little black mantles, chatter about the last quadrille Chinoise they danced at the Closerie. These groups, with children chasing huge wash-leather footballs in every direction; and a few old men sunning themselves on the benches near at hand, make up a scene to which the fountain before the palace, and the splendid rows of trees leading to it, furnish a pretty background.

For the student, inclined to be idle, to have a scene like this within five minutes walk of his hotel, is to be powerfully tempted. When he is tired of the soldiers, he strolls into the splendid kitchen gardens of the palace, to watch the growth of the vines, or sniff the perfume of the fruit-blossoms. Then, there is a little café, absolutely in the palace grounds, under the shade of some magnificent trees. Hence he may lounge past the orangery, to the pretty gardens close to the palace, surrounded by statues of the queens of France. Here the children of the neighbourhood swarm; here priests, in thin black cassocks and three-cornered hats, walk leisurely about; and here ladies sit to read romances or work embroidery; while dozens of little boats swim about the fountain basin, and two swans receive their daily supply of biscuits de Rheims from the little owners of the shipping.

And then, when the burning midday sun drives the idler from the gardens, the palace built for Marie de Medicis—which the genius of Rubens was employed to decorate—remains to be visited.

In the two hundred and thirty years during which the palace has stood, how many scenes of terrible interest have passed within its walls; upon how much ruined greatness have its iron gates turned! Here the Dowager Queen of Spain, widow of the first Louis, and daughter of the Regent, passed her widowhood and died. Here Rubens's decorations and illustrations of Marie de Medicis were exhibited; and here were first shown to the public, in 1750, a few of the old masters in the possession of the Royal Family, which became the nucleus of that splendid collection of paintings now gathered within the walls of the Louvre. But when, in 1779, Louis the Sixteenth gave the palace to his brother, the Count de Provence (afterwards Louis the Eighteenth), Rubens's pictures and the works forming the public gallery were removed, and set apart to be added to the Louvre collection. And then dark days fell upon the palace, while the gloom of the revolution was over the capital. Presently, however, it was decorated for the Directory; then for the Senat Conservateur; then again, in 1802, a gallery of old masters was collected within its walls, to be withdrawn finally to fill up gaps in the Louvre collection, in 1815. It was that same Count de Provence, who once held the palace as his private property, who gave importance to the building, afterwards occupied by his chamber of peers, by ordering that a gallery of modern French artists should be formed in one of the wings. To carry out this project, some of the more remarkable pictures by French artists in the Louvre and the Royal palaces, were removed hither. This exhibition, which included

some celebrated pictures by David, Gros, and Gerard, was opened to the public for the first time in 1818. And this collection is now free to all who have an hour to spare and who are armed with passports.

The way to the gallery, up a narrow stone staircase, is not impressive. It is unlike a French approach to an art gallery, although it might serve such a purpose, without notice, in England. A ring at a bell on the first-floor, summons an important person in a cocked hat, and green and red livery, who examines the applicant's passport, takes his cane (for which he charges him two sous) and lets him loose in the gallery. The pictures in the collection are, generally, very well known: it is with the copyists that the idle student's interest will lie. Here he is certain to meet some friends; and, as he strolls from one easel to another, with a lively word for each acquaintance, and a criticism on each copy, the time flies onward to his perfect satisfaction.

Those copyists are a peculiar class in Paris. They supply the market with imitations of popular paintings. The visitor, entering the gallery for the first time, if he have been many weeks in Paris, knows almost every picture. Copies of them are to be seen in any quarter of the capital: they are heaped up in the shops in the Rue de Seine—they choke up the gateways on the Quai Voltaire—they used to dangle in the wind outside the gates of the Louvre. And here they are by dozens, lying against the walls, under the originals. Four people, with their easels ingeniously grouped within the narrowest possible space, are painting Scheffer's Charlotte Corday: three distinct

copies of Rosa Bonheur's masterly Ploughed Field, are peeping from the canvass: De la Roche's Death of Queen Elizabeth is being reproduced on four or five different scales: the picture of the Last Victims of the Reign of Terror, by Müller, with André Chenier as the central figure, is being mercilessly picked from; some taking only the head of the poet; others snatching the face of a terrified woman. And the young Princes in the Tower, by De la Roche, are being as mercilessly murdered by two copyists as they were, in reality, by the hired assassins. One glance at the copyists, however, is more interesting and pleasing than two at the copies.

Many are women—some young women. These are very negligently dressed. Their cloaks and bonnets are put aside in a heap, and some black lace, or a coquettish handkerchief, is gracefully tied over the head. They have generally a sad, careworn, business look; and they proceed with their painting as listlessly as the seamstress goes on with her sewing. They are undisturbed by the stare of visitors, and hear passing criticism without the least exhibition of pleasure or resentment. There they sit upon their little deal stools, with very shabby, dirty paint-boxes beside them, wielding huge palettes, and adding their browns and greens with a praiseworthy vigour. So do some old ladies, who wear spectacles, and a dingy costume, and who appear to have been at work forty or fifty years.

The male copyists are a motley race. Some are finished dandies, others are the most slovenly fellows it is possible to imagine; some have their hair beauti-

fully brushed and pomatumed, and sport shining coats, apparently worn for the first time; others are in greasy, threadbare garments, adopt the negligent style of coiffure, and are not sufficiently ostentatious to wash hands or face. It may be perhaps noticed that the latter are, generally, better artists than the well-pomatumed copyists. One very dandified old gentleman, who attends the gallery, may be remarked for the care with which he envelopes his arms, up to the elbows, in black satin bags, to preserve his coat from contact with paint or varnish.

The student's idle day is spent altogether near the Panthéon. There are many cafés at hand, where, when he is tired of the pictures and the gardens of the Luxembourg, he may have his absinthe or his billiards: or there are cabinets where he can have his two sous worth of popular literature. But he is possibly, not inclined even for the lightest reading, and strolls back to the "*nourriture simple et fortifiante*" which he enjoys at his hotel, together with his lodging, for about sixteen or eighteen shillings per week.

The simplicity of the food to be had at a student's hotel, at this price, is as questionable, perhaps, as its fortifying qualities. Yet, at dinner, it includes two or three *plâts*, a dessert of course, and wine. But then a cauliflower is a course in itself; and a teaspoonful of jelly supports, unaided, the dignity of a dessert. Still the student is gay at his dinner; and will get up between the courses, with one of his companions, dance a polka round the table, and resume his seat. He eats his simple and fortifying fare,

laughing at it all the time. Perhaps this laughter helps him to digest it. We remember the ecstasies with which a young fellow was one day received at dinner, who had returned from the Longchamps fair in the Champs Elysées, with the intelligence that there was a living skeleton exhibiting there, who, he said, had been brought up on a "nourriture simple et fortifiante." On another occasion the production of an omelette au rhum caused a great sensation at the same student's hotel: the wild guests skipping round the table, shouting, as they pointed to the effort of culinary genius, "Ah! Quel luxe! Ah! Quel luxe!"

The dinner conversation is interspersed generally, with medical and legal anecdotes. One gentleman excuses his absence from a party, by the intelligence that he has a body in hand. And, considering that two medical students are entitled only to five bodies per annum between them, it will be seen that, to be in actual possession of one of these, is to be in luck's way entirely. "We have two bodies and a half each," said a ghastly little student to us one day, as he handed us the biscuit de Rheims, which represented our dessert on the occasion. It was fortunate that the subject rapidly changed to one of "ponch."

To get up a "ponch" party is, in the estimation of the student, a highly pleasant way of finishing an idle morning; and it is amusing to watch the excitement with which the diners who drop in to the table d'hôte, are requested to add their fifteen sous to the ponch subscription. A sufficient number of contributors

having been obtained, the best available rooms are selected, and the contractor for the entertainment proceeds to buy three or four pounds of lump sugar, two or three bottles of brandy, a bottle of Kirsch, one of rum, a heap of biscuits and a huge baba! These materials are arranged upon the mantelpiece of the room selected for the entertainment; the guests assemble, each man bringing his own tumbler from his own wash-hand stand; two or three walk up and down learning off songs from bits of paper, with an excited air; and the landlady sends up a message, declaring that she will not allow any singing on the part of messieurs les locataires after eleven o'clock. This message is received with shouts of derision; the young fellows skip about the ponch bol (which is a common brown earthenware pan); examine the contents of the bottles; and stop every man who begins a song, by declaring that he is anticipating the entertainment. Then the master of the ceremonies opens the proceedings by making a kettleful of green tea over a spirit lamp. This accomplished, he half fills the "bol" with sugar, then empties a bottle of brandy and a considerable quantity of rum upon it. The next proceeding is to light the spirit. This accomplished, all the candles are extinguished, and to the glare of the blue flame from the ponch-bol, which mounts a considerable height, the wild young fellows open their concert. As they gesticulate and shout about the bol, they look like burlesque demons. Their songs are chiefly laments over the degenerate days of le vieux Quartier Latin. The ponch having burned for about three quarters of an

hour, is ladled out to the guests; pipes are lighted; and lively conversation is carried on.

Suddenly it is suggested that the hour for dancing has arrived. The door of an adjoining room is thrown open, disclosing an apartment regularly cleared, for a polka. A stranger instantly wonders, where the ladies are coming from; but he is soon relieved from any doubt by an invitation from one of the young men, to dance with him. The night is warm; the windows are thrown open; the students remove their coats; and then, to the fiddle of a fellow-student, dance a quadrille among themselves. The quadrille is followed by a polka; and then the second bol of ponch is lighted—this time a bol of Kirsch ponch. Then the baba is cut up and demolished, amid practical jokes, usually played in England at the age of twelve. And then follow songs; and eau-de-vie de Dantzic; and romping; and, in short, the usual consequences of ponch. With a light song, however, and a steady candlestick, the gay fellows presently skip off to bed, pinching and pushing one another, as they run up the broad staircase of the hotel.

CHAPTER VII.

THE RABBIT SKINS OF PARIS.

RABBITS are decidedly popular among the Parisians under the well-known form of gibelottes. How many pleasant parties have been to the Bois de Boulogne for its famous stews of rabbits? How many couples have enjoyed the cheap gibelotte of the Banlieue? I endeavoured to arrive at something like a fair estimate of the number of rabbits consumed annually within the fortifications—but the hundreds of thousands with which I was assailed, completely overpowered me—and I gave up the endeavour with the reflection that the number would frighten the most populous warren in Europe. I was attracted to the subject by the curious stories I had heard of the men who stroll about Paris streets, buying the skins of these popular animals. The rabbit-skin buyers of Paris are really and truly a brotherhood apart from the rest of the working population; and moreover are, with all their roving habits and the speculator's character of their calling, an eminently moral and provident set of men. They are all Auvergnats—and all have one ambition, which is, to return to their native villages with money sufficient to buy a patch of

land, and carry them, in comfort, to the graveyard of the church in which they were christened. To effect this ultimate object, the rabbit-skin buyer adopts all kind of economical doctrines; and some of these may serve to guide less prudent men.

Men who are well acquainted with the by-ways of Paris, know that there was a spot—not far from the Panthéon—and very near the quarter where the chiffonniers congregate in vast numbers—devoted almost exclusively to the rabbit-skin buyers of Paris. This spot included nearly the entire length of the Rue St. Jean de Latran: but the improvements which are now in progress in this quarter—and which will certainly run over some of the most pestilent spots of the capital—have already included the demolition of this street—so that, at the present time, these prudent Auvergnats are scattered all over Paris, in any establishments where cheap lodging is to be had. For cheap lodging they are always determined to have, or how will the bit of land be bought? This cheapness, which they appear to have studied with remarkable success, has led them to band themselves into companies of six. Thus banded, they seek lodgings where they can have one bed-room containing three beds—and separate places, where each man may deposit his skins and other purchases.

Two men sleep in each bed—and in this way their shelter costs them about fifty francs, or two pounds sterling a-year each. This is already a great saving. Having arranged for lodging, their next care is to attend to the food. An association of six people can live cheaper than six separate individuals—this is

an established doctrine of household economy—and one, moreover, which is fully understood by the Auvergnats. They have, therefore, nailed up a box in their common room, wherein each man deposits a ten-sous piece. The fund thus created, is spent in making soup twice daily for the little community. This soup is prepared at noon, and at six o'clock in the evening. Each man is charged, in rotation, with the responsibilities of the kitchen; and on these days he returns from his business in the streets at eleven o'clock and five o'clock, so that the soup shall be ready when his associates make their appearance. And then the six take their food together—each man having his own bread and his own cheese:—the latter has generally been sent from the beloved Auvergne. The community of food is strictly confined to soup—but then their soup is their chief sustenance! With these prudential arrangements the rabbit-skin buyers estimate their daily expenses at fifteen sous each.

It is really curious to remark the many exemplifications of the all-engrossing object to which their lives are devoted. They are not frequenters of Barrière balls:—they are not to be seen habitually in wine-shops. Occasionally some of them may be found in a condition which would not recommend them to the good graces of Father Mathew; but then, be sure, these are extraordinary occasions—most probably one of their great sale days, when they have realised upon the hoarded labour of six months. A little excitement of this kind may well be excused after the sober six months of labour, and of stinted appetite, which have preceded it.

The rabbit-skin buyer is an early riser. He is generally off on his rounds by seven o'clock in the morning. If he deals also—as most of them do—in clean rags, old metal, and old hats, he has a bag with him. He is neatly dressed; but his thin, pale, face proclaims his habit of stinting himself, and the trade—not too healthy—in which he is engaged. He generally wanders on his way, with a careless walk, looking to the right and to the left, for the skins which have contained the popular gibelottes. It is amusing to watch him, when he has discovered a skin hung out to attract his attention. He walks lazily up to it, examines it with a careless air, and then drops it with a look of disappointment. Just as he is passing on, he asks the owner the price he puts upon it. The owner's price, of course, does not satisfy him. Four sous for that skin! He doesn't mind giving two sous! He generally finds that the owner follows him, and lets him have it at his own price. In this way he wanders all day long, from street to street, picking up bargains. In one street he will secure an old hat for six sous; in another he gets four or five pounds of white rags, having paid for three pounds at the rate of three sous per pound. For the prudent Auvergnat includes in his notions of economy, that of cheating in weight. One man owned to me that he averaged four pounds under weight to the twenty—as a rule. Thus, in counting the value they put upon clean white rags, at three sous per pound, they literally pay twenty per cent. less for them. This habit is not quite so creditable to the fraternity as their other prudential arrangements.

The rabbit-skin buyer does not usually confine his operations to skins, chiffons, and iron; but extends them, whenever he has an opportunity, to the purchase of old boots and grease. This latter commodity, however, is not much sought after now; since the hotel proprietors burn composition candles (those bougies well-known to most travellers as making the most extortionate item of all continental hotels), and the waiters have no longer grease pots to dispose of. All these extra purchases are bargains to which the rabbit-skin buyer is open—as he is open to any way which leads to profit. It is his business—his exclusive business—in Paris to make money. He does not want the money to spend in choppines, or to dance with ouvrières: he has a pocket into which he intends to button it securely, so that he may leave the capital at the earliest possible moment. This view of life cannot flatter the pride of the Parisians with whom he comes in contact, as it is easy to conceive; but then it is not his business to flatter—if he could buy flattery in a cheap market and sell it in a dear market, he would deal in it, but on no other condition. As it is, he makes usually, between three and four francs a day, by his bargains in rabbit skins, so that he is able to put away regularly, two francs and a half every evening. But then his business requires capital; and it is precisely for this reason that he is firm in his resolve to save. The more he can save the more he can make; since he is enabled to accumulate his bargains to sell only when the market is brisk.

The most flourishing of the rabbit-skin buyers of *Paris*, sell their skins only once in six months.

Many of them, when they have been some years at the business; when they have made themselves thoroughly acquainted with the value and the tricks of the trade in chiffons, take a little shop, where the wife carries on the business, while the husband wanders through the streets in quest of skins. And the anecdotes of little fortunes accumulated in this way;—the little properties dotted about Auvergne, which represent only so many gibelottes eaten in the Bois de Boulogne, would astonish any casual observer. These results are not remarkable when the price at which the rabbit-skin buyer purchases a skin, and that at which he sells it, are contrasted. It appears that the price at which the Auvergnat will buy a skin varies, from two sous to four sous; but the price at which two-thirds are sold, does not probably exceed the lower figure, and is often not more than one sou. Now, the price at which the rabbit-skin buyer is disposed to sell, is at the rate of thirty francs per hundred skins of the best quality, and of fifteen francs for a hundred skins of an inferior quality. Thus, for good skins, the Auvergnat gives, on an average, three sous, and obtains six sous; and on very inferior skins, realises a profit of at least one sou and a half. The old iron he buys, he sells at the rate of seventeen to eighteen francs per hundred kilogrammes. These profits on his capital, soon enable the prudent Auvergnat to enlarge his sphere of operations; but, in his prosperity, when he counts his savings by hundreds and even thousands of francs, he does not usually lose his head. He sticks to his original calling—goes out daily in quest of skins, and deposits his money in a

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safe quarter. The skin, to him, is a reality ;—every other speculation, except those in old rags, leather, &c., is to him, wild and unreal. He will not embark in anything more respectable than his original calling. He has faith in anything second or third hand ;—he decidedly believes that Aladdin's lamp was a battered lamp picked up by an Arabian chiffonnier.

One day I met a remarkable specimen of the rabbit-skin buyers of Paris. He was a sullen man, with a strong sense of independence about him. This sense had led him to the conclusion that, to be a sociable man, was to be a slave. Man, to be free, must be isolated. This was his view ; and in vain might any man, even the subtlest logician, strive to wean him from his creed. He had lived up to it strictly. He had been pressed to join many of the little associations of his brethren—to be one of six ; but he had always declined to be subject to the rules of anybody. He would be his own free agent ; he would take his soup at the house where he felt inclined to take it ; he would have a room where he could do exactly as he pleased, without having to consult a second individual's whims. And at the time he spoke he was enjoying his own inclination in the matter of a choppine at a wine-shop. He acknowledged at once, that, unlike the rest of his brotherhood, he had not saved a sou. But he justified his spendthrift habits as complacently as he accounted for his happy isolation. He had nobody to care or provide for. He enjoyed the money he made ; he had no reason to save. When he was without money he knew how to make it. It was very true that many rabbit-skin buyers of his

acquaintance had saved considerable sums of money; but he did not envy them their economy. I pressed this very original rabbit-skin buyer to give me one or two examples, and he complied very readily with my request, with the air of a man who thought my curiosity rather childish.

"There is —," he said, "who began life in his twelfth year as a chimney-sweeper. He remained a sweep until he was fifteen, when he joined his brother in the business of rabbit-skin buyer. By degrees they managed to save sufficient money to establish themselves in a little chiffon shop, where they bought old iron, rags, &c. Their plan was to take the street by turns: one day one brother kept the shop while the other went his round for rabbit-skins; and on the morrow, the brother who had remained at home, took his turn at the street work. In this way they worked together during six years, when his brother died. At the time of his brother's death they had saved twelve thousand francs, or four hundred and eighty pounds sterling. Their mother had begged her bread for years, when the six thousand francs left by her dead son were sent to her, to make her comfortable for the remainder of her life. But the surviving brother, thus deprived of the partner of his bosom, also, within six months after his first loss. This double affliction weighed heavily upon the poor fellow, and he grieved till he became so ill that he was incapacitated for work during eighteen months. His sister attended to the shop during his long illness; and when he recovered, he removed to the regular rabbit-skin

buyers' locality,—the Rue St. Jean de Latran. In this street he carried on his business during twenty-five years; and left the old shop, at last, with four hundred thousand francs in his pocket. He now lives in the Rue Neuve d'Etienne. He is still in business with his son, as a rabbit-skin and chiffon buyer; and so popular is he, and so well known, that any body can vouch for the truth of this story." The independent rabbit-skin buyer here turned to one or two associates, who all knew the lucky man, and declared that his fortune was not over-estimated. And they also had stories to tell of rabbit-skin buyers worth their five and ten thousand francs. I appeared astonished, whereupon they turned round upon me, a little hurt, and exclaimed that the Auvergnats were not beggars.

I endeavoured also to estimate the number of men in Paris deriving their living from the rabbit-skin trade. On reference to the report made by the Chamber of Commerce on Parisian industry, I found no mention whatever made of the Auvergnats, who collect the rabbit-skins and hare-skins of the capital, although it contained an important chapter devoted to the workmen and workwomen who prepare these skins for the hatters. Considering that the skins collected by the Auvergnats give employment to about six hundred people, who rub the skins, and drag the hairs from them, and sort and clean them, and finally hand them over to the hatmakers, the estimate of our independent friend was not extravagantly high, since he put down the number of his fraternity at three thousand.

Many a double profit does the dealer in rabbit-

skins make upon the same skin ! First, he sells it to be plucked for the nap of hats ; and at last, when the hat upon which it has been worn, gets old and rusty, all that is valuable in the rabbit-skin returns to him, to be a second time turned to profitable account.

It is estimated that the fur plucked annually from the backs of rabbits' and hares' skins in Paris, is sold, when manufactured and cleaned, to the hatters, for not less than two millions and a half of francs. This estimate, which is one backed by the authority of the French Chamber of Commerce, will give the reader some notion of the important part our Auvergnats play in the commercial economy of the capital. Let them, some fine morning, break up their little associations, withdraw their soup subscriptions from their box, cease to go their rounds in search of rabbit-skins, and a considerable body of the Parisian public would find themselves strangely puzzled how to proceed with their business. The fortunes made out of skins do not appear so extraordinary, when we find that ingenious workmen annually drag from rabbits' backs about one hundred thousand pounds sterling. This was the estimate for 1847 ; but the annual value has probably much increased since that year. The rabbit-skins of the Auvergnats not only supply the hat-makers of the capital with material, but also furnish quantities of hair to the American market. But before the rabbits' hairs are ready for the hat-makers they pass through many processes.

In the first instance, the skin falls into the vigorous hands of an arracheuse, who with a large knife, drags all the long coarse hairs from it, leaving only the fine

undercoat of down. It comes next under the notice of the *sécreteur*, who rubs it with a mercurial preparation, to loosen the down. This preparation having been administered, the *brosseuse* takes the skin and brushes the down clean; whereupon the *coupeur* advances with his shears, and then the *trieuse* takes the down to sort the fine hairs from the coarse.

Even now the hairs are not ready for the *hatter*. The *monteuse* has yet to pack up the various kinds of hairs in separate parcels; and the packets have then to undergo the *soufflage*, in order to detect any lurking coarse hairs left by the *arracheuse*. At this work the men earn, on an average, three francs a day; some, however, who are very expert, gain five francs. The women are not so well paid. The highest daily salary among them is two francs and a half, the lowest fifteen sous; but the average salary is one franc thirteen sous.*

Thus the Boulevards' dandy wears on his head the skin of the *gibelotte* he ate last summer, nor dreams how that *gibelotte* skin has employed many industrious people, who live and work in the secluded byways of the capital. Well, long may *gibelottes* be eaten in the Bois de Boulogne, for the benefit of the Auvergnats; and may many little properties in Auvergne continue to be only so many pretty monuments of rabbit-skins!

* The above were the wages paid in 1847.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DEMI-TASSE.

WE have all seen pictures of ferocious little demons hovering, with the thinnest conceivable legs, and the most fleshless arms and fingers, over a bottle! By these demoniac presences we have been led to infer that some deadly poison was contained in the said bottle:—that something was to come out of it shortly, that would work everybody's destruction. The designers of these pictures declared that the above expectation was a most reasonable one. The bottle did contain a very subtle poison—a poison that made the nose swell—that gave a mulberry tint to an alabaster face—that seriously weakened the strength of the legs—that made the voice husky. And so men were advised not to touch it. Gentlemen in white neckcloths rose to inform vast assemblies of edified people that in this bottle lay the demon Alcohol. And a very subtle demon he was, said they; for he works his bad purposes in the guise of a friend. At a first interview he delights most young men, and it is only when he has fastened his fascinating power fairly upon them—when he is their constant visitor and bosom friend, that he exhibits himself to the

world as their worst enemy. To his victims—and this is the greatest curse of his influence—he always appears as a pleasant fellow. The more they know him—the deeper is their love for him. Therefore, men called aloud to the people, to trample down demon Alcohol. Little children were taught songs expressive of their disgust for him; and forward little boys who declared, at the early age of seven years, that they would never have anything to do with him,—were presented with bright little medals to be worn about their innocent little necks. They learned lively little chorusses, in which they exhibited a ferocious and uncontrollable antipathy for gin; and in which they declared that they would not hear of a compromise in the matter, by the admixture even of a bucketfull of water.

The teachers of this determined little band were glib with their theory, and exhibited, to the horrified gaze of large assemblies, terrible pictures of destruction worked by gin. Gin made men murder their wives. Gin taught men to break into houses. Gin gave the forger the talent for counterfeiting his neighbour's hand-writing. Gin so perverted all men's minds that wrong became with them indisputable right. And then followed the notable sequence—all men who took a drop of spirit or wine were dangerous animals. Dainty ladies, quietly sipping their one glass of wine before leaving the gentlemen, were not to be trusted in anything;—learned lawyers, regaling themselves after a long day in court, with a genial bottle of port, were individuals to be shunned: reverend gentlemen, imbibing just one glass of sherry between

morning and afternoon service, were not sane men. No man, in short, who took a thimble-full of brandy was an honest member of society, unless he really and truly took that thimble-full medically. Yet these teachers walked about with the daily consumers of a bottle of port—even dined with these—I am told, without exhibiting the slightest fear.

That gentleman of decidedly aqueous tendencies, Mr. Water de Butt, was a vehement advocate for the consumption of the New River Company's liquid, unmixed. The mere suggestion of a drop of sherry would send him into a violent fit of hysterics, during which he would shriek, "The fiend!—the fiend!" and brandish his arms in the air to protect himself. Yet, mark, Mr. Water de Butt at his friend's table. His friend takes a moderate quantity of wine—all his friend's guests take wine, and there sits Water de Butt, the solitary "safe" man of the company. Yet, observe the vehement opponent of the demon Gin! Our host has challenged him to take wine. Water de Butt is not at all troubled by the request; but, dexterously twisting his own peculiar bottle from his pocket, he pours some sherry into his glass, and, bowing graciously, drinks it. People who know Water de Butt, stare: but, aside, the great teacher informs them that he carries about with him, always, a little vial of toast-and-water, which, being a close imitation of sherry, keeps his conscience clear and hides his fanatical temperance. And so Water de Butt is ashamed, after all, of his vocation, and carries a little pocket lie about with him, that he may hide the doctrines he preaches. Perhaps, after all, he has

moments when he has doubts: when he sees good qualities in his demon; when he notices little touches about him, not altogether diabolical. At these times it may have been suggested to him that the fruits of the earth, whereof wine is made, were surely intended for the comfort and the good of the human race; and that all the atrocities and the evils which he has been accustomed to trace to the glowing vineyards of Germany and France, might and would exist, even when the vine disease had eaten up every bunch of grapes. He could not help seeing—as all reasonable men had seen for years past—that the man who drank wine instead of water must become a madman;—that the habitual sot, with his shoulder ever pressed against the tavern-door, had his eye often glowing with the passions of a fiend. On the other hand, it has long been seen by reasonable people that wine may be taken temperately and with the best effect; that total abstinence is a doctrine to be enforced only among men who have lost all control over their appetites, and that it is not to be laid before poor little children, who are hereby asked to be reformers of drunkenness, when they should know nothing of the vice, and to despise all people who have the audacity to moisten their lips even with negus.

After all, Mr. Water de Butt may cross the Channel, and, having made his way to Paris, notice his own peculiar little demon perched upon a coffee-pot: a demon said to have paid his first visit to Paris, in the coffee-pot of the Turkish ambassador, whom Mahomet the Fourth, sent to Louis the Fourteenth. Of the tavern-life of England and its shameful orgies

—of the phases of drunkenness exhibited in London, from the gin-nose of the cabman to the port-nose of the alderman, Mr. Water de Butt knows every point. He has visited the worst haunts of his native metropolis—he has been bonneted in every London Alley. Therefore, he is an authority on English drunkenness, and can describe its phases,—from the man gently laughing after the first tumbler, to the dogged stickler for his eighth “go.”

Well, let Mr. de Butt, once cross the Seine by the Pont des Arts, and wend his way past the Institute, towards the Odéon. Say he undertakes this journey after his breakfast at a temperance hotel, where, for a moderate sum, bread and water may be had—*à discretion*. He will notice that all the cafés are in a bustle—that business is even now very brisk. It is only eleven o’clock, yet it is hardly possible to find a seat in that great establishment to the left of the Odéon. Mr. Water de Butt is invited to enter it, and if he can bear the dense atmosphere of tobacco smoke, to take a seat in the corner, and watch the progress of events. The dame du comptoir wears a very fine cap, and accepts the little “additions” of her wild customers, with most refreshing politeness. There are about twenty little marble tables ranged round the room; the great stove in the centre is piled up with coffee-cups and little goutte glasses; and the rattling of dominoes, and the laughter and vehement arguments of the players, are deafening. The waiters, to make themselves heard at the comptoir, are obliged to shout with all the power of their Gascon lungs. All this, heard and seen in a heavy

atmosphere of smoke, in which the day without, appears to be perceivable only through smoked glass, gives strange ideas of French habits to the casual visitor. It is amusing to remark the habitués drop in. Here come two students without collars—hair decidedly in want of a good combing—trousers fitting tight to the most circuitous legs—bright-coloured pea-green or snuff-brown close coats—hats brushed the wrong way and worn on the back of the head, possibly in imitation of the prevailing bonnet fashion. One comes steadily in; the second raises his hat, then rushes wildly to a friend whom he recognises, throws his arms about his neck, and rolls upon a seat with him. A third student makes his appearance, alone, and, sitting upon a corner of one of the tables, watches a game of dominoes, humming the while, “*Les Pièces d’Or*.” A fifth student enters with a young lady of faded complexion, rendered more remarkable by the freshest of bonnets; these chat with a friend or two, then pass into the adjoining room to breakfast. Enter a crowd of students, all smoking and all laughing, talking generally of the fun of the previous night. This happy group of men ought to be at the *Ecole du Droit*, hearing a lecture;—they prefer a game of cards, however, and proceed to indulge this preference. Other groups, deep in the chances of dominoes, should be dissecting. But the fun has fairly set in; and the *Ecoles du Droit* and *de Medecine* may proceed with their business as it pleases the masters thereof, without them.

Mr. Water de Butt may now observe the groups I have described. They all take their *demi-tasse*.

Some play for a second instalment of coffee; others prefer barley-water, or sugar and water, or absinthe! These drinks, which Mr. de Butt considers perfectly harmless, are most extensively patronised in the establishment he has done us the honour to visit. Very few of these wild young fellows take much cognac in the morning; yet they play on at dominoes or cards till the hour has arrived for other excitement. Some may indulge in occasional choppes—but it may be safely said that the prevailing drink is coffee—that the Frenchman's demon perches upon a biggin! Coffee carries French students through a day's dissipation as successfully as pale ale and whiskey support the temple student and the embryo medical man from their beds to Cremorne.

Sitting in this foggy café, with the bright sun shining overhead, amid the shouting and rattling of dominoes, it is easy to trace the histories of many of these luckless youths. Little do they think now, in the fun of student life, of the pinches their poor parents have given themselves to send them to Paris. If, suddenly, the fathers of these forty or fifty matutinal gamblers for sous, were to appear in the café and find the boys they believed were preparing to move the world, sipping absinthe, and betting upon cards, the scene would probably be one to touch anybody's heart. We should see, among these dreaming fathers, old, white-haired farmers in gaiters; needy medical men; poor provincial tradesmen; and, most probably, sorrowful widows. And then these young fellows would drop the dominoes, throw the cards under the table, and

slink, ashamed, away to their studies. Here, however, Mr. de Butt will observe, there is none of the pale ale or whiskey of London medical life or the Temple ; —all this is based upon coffee, sugar-and-water, barley-water, and absinthe ; but chiefly upon coffee !

Mr. de Butt, further to convince himself, may follow these young students through their long idle days, from the café and the billiard-table to the cheap restaurant, where they will dine for little more than a franc, enjoying, for this moderate payment, three or four plats, and some wine of the least exciting character. The instant this dinner is finished, their demon comes again to them upon the coffee-pot, and they while away the hours till the Prado is opened, over their café-noir. To the Prado, a gentleman so serious as Mr. Water de Butt, will, of course, decline to follow them ; but let us assure him that here, where the amusement consists of the wildest dances, and the most tempting games of chance, the demon sits still upon his favourite coffee-pot.

In France, coffee draws the husband from his shop to the Boulevards where, while his wife attends to the ledger, he reads the news under the awning of a café. Coffee teaches men to be idle, and to fall into evil ways. Coffee tempts lads to steal. Coffee does, in short, all that gin does in England. If Mr. de Butt will saunter along the Boulevards any bright morning from the Madeleine to the site of the Bastille, he will have an opportunity of observing the head-quarters of the demon—coffee. On either side of this celebrated way, are splendid houses devoted to the interests of the demon ; and outside these houses,

about two o'clock, are congregated thousands of men who are fairly within the grasp of the destroyer—who, having sipped coffee from the hour of rising to within an hour of dinner-time, then forsake it for the time, to enjoy absinthe !

Think, Mr. de Butt, of the days wasted here over coffee-cups ;—think of the hours devoted to barley-water that might have been given to honest work. Thousands of men are never drunk in France, because they are never quite sober. The dissipation is spread over a longer time than with us. The Frenchman begins directly he is up. He puts his first cigar in his mouth as he gives the final touch of *cire de moustache* to his beard ; and never ceases to smoke from that hour till bed-time, except during his mid-day breakfast and his evening dinner.

Thus, Mr. Water de Butt may see for himself that all the dire effects of drunkenness may be arrived at by a Frenchman with an English temperance medal about his neck. He may be led into habits of idleness ; he may be tempted to steal ; he may undermine his health ; he may take to low resorts ; he may grow irritable, and passionate, and beat his wife ; he may be driven to forgery and ruin, and all by the demon sitting upon a coffee-pot ! Mr. de Butts may notice, too, as a curious point of the picture, how the French genius has developed itself in the manufacture of coffee-pots. They are fashioned in every convenient and inconvenient shape—from the ingenious and scientific apparatus known to the learned on this subject, as the Etna, to the homely biggin with the flannel bag. The French demon comes through a snake's

head ; boils over, in elegant columns, into the vessel placed for his reception ; or emerges from a colossal coffee-pot in heavy black columns, as at the Rotonde and the Café de Paris.

The workman earning two or three francs a-day, equally with the merchant bidding for thousands at the Bourse, has his coffee, and sits over it during long hours, and makes it his joy and comfort. It may be had for two sous per cup at the Californie ; for fifteen sous at Vachette's ; for four sous at any laiterie. At all railway stations enjoying the advantages of a refreshment-room, it is laid out in cups, ready for travellers ; at all the theatres it is eagerly offered to the spectators. Every Frenchman who is doubtful as to the kind of refreshment he requires, decides in favour of coffee ; for, over a cup of this beverage he may comfortably sit for a full hour, and enjoy his two sous cigar, look at the bustle going on about him ; and as he drinks it, may vow that it is the healthiest concoction he could possibly incorporate.

All these scenes may probably horrify Mr. Water de Butt, and even tempt him to originate a society for the suppression of coffee drinking ; but I cannot promise him any success in this undertaking. He might easily find his terrible examples amongst the dark, snuffy old gentlemen to be remarked, during the warmer part of the day, crawling along the Boulevards, wrapped in heavy cloaks reaching to their heels ;—for most of these old gentlemen are confirmed coffee-drinkers. They crawl out of bed to light the little spirit-lamp which makes the first demi-tasse ; and from

that time the little lamp is lit at frequent intervals throughout the day. They are only a shade or two lighter in complexion than the coffee they drink. And then, pointing to these sexagenarians, Mr. de Butt may grow very eloquent, and denounce the demon Coffee with that vehement invective which he has been accustomed to concentrate upon his old enemy, alcohol. Taking these unhappy examples, he may make a little way ; as, by taking horrible specimens of men brutalised by drink, he has made converts in England ; but whether he will be able to lead husbands from coffee and dominoes, to ledgers and the service of customers, is another point. In France, as in England, the vice may have a deeper root than Mr. Water de Butt and his friends dream of. Men take to drink, or to coffee, not from an innate love of gin or coffee, but from motives of which de Butt is not a sagacious reader. A man with a temperance medal round his neck is not a hero—always. If this medal have drawn his name from the list of drunkards nightly among the police charges, it has done good work, undoubtedly, in an individual instance ; but de Butt will possibly learn, some day, that national intemperance is best battled against by national education ; and that, by cultivating the moral instincts of the child, he is better preserved from after-vices, than by descriptions of terrible tavern scenes done into doggrel, and vociferated over tumblers of water.

Education will vanquish idleness in the end. Idleness being vanquished, men will forsake tea, and coffee and dominoes throughout the day, for the pursuit

of honourable achievements ; and then, men having no longer idle hours to be filled up, cafés and public-houses will no longer be crowded soon after sunrise.

Meanwhile, Mr. Water de Butt may break lances (and in the battle he may do little bits of good work) with the English demon who presides over the gin-bottle, and the French demon who squats upon a biggin !

CHAPTER IX.

BEHIND THE LOUVRE.

"PEOPLE may wish to know why I pull up here, and begin to play the fool. I am a pencil manufacturer, nothing more. I know that my pencils are good, look here! (Exhibits a medal). This medal was given to me, as the manufacturer of these superlative pencils, by the Council of the Great Exhibition of London."

With this preliminary flourish, a very fashionable-looking gentleman, who has drawn up his carriage upon the little square behind the Louvre, opens an address to a number of persons who begin to gather about him. His equipage is handsome; and people wonder what he means by this curious proceeding. Presently they perceive that in the buggy there is an organ, and that the individual perched behind the gentleman fulfils the double functions of footman and organ-grinder. They perceive also, that the servant wears a magnificent livery, part of it consisting of a huge brass helmet, from the summit of which immense tricolor feathers flutter conspicuously in the breeze. The gentleman suddenly rings a bell, and forthwith the footman in the buggy grinds a lively air. The

crowd rapidly increases. The gentleman is very grave: he looks quietly at the people about him, and then addresses them a second time, having rung the little bell to stop his footman's organ:—

“Now I dare say you wonder what I am going to be about! Well, I will begin with the story which led me to this charlatan life—for I am a charlatan—there's no denying it. I was, as you all know, an ordinary pencil merchant; and, although I sold my pencils in the street from my carriage seat, I was dressed like any of you. Well, one day, when I was selling my pencils almost as rapidly as they deserve to be sold, a low fellow set up his puppet-show close by me—and all my customers rushed away from me. I found that my trade was likely to suffer severely: and as you may easily imagine, I was not very pleased with the prospect. But suddenly I thought—alas! if public taste encourage charlatans—and I must live by the whims of a public so degenerate, I too must become a charlatan. And here I am—a charlatan from the tips of my tricolor feathers to the nail-heads of my boots, selling excellent pencils for forty centimes each, as you shall presently see.”

This second speech concluded in the most serious manner, the orator and pencil-merchant produces from the carriage seat a splendid coat embroidered with gold: he puts this on with the most finished gravity—then turns full upon the crowd to watch its effect upon them. Then he takes his hat off with a magnificent sweep, picks up a huge brass helmet from the bottom of the carriage, and tries it on. Again he looks gravely upon the crowd, suddenly removes the helmet,

and places, singly, three plumes representing the national tricolor, in it, watching the effect upon the spectators, as he adds each feather. Having surveyed the general effect of the helmet thus decorated, he again puts it on ; and, turning now proudly upon the people, folds his arms and looks stedfastly before him. After a pause, he rings his little bell, and the plumed organist behind him plays a soft and soothing air.

To this tune he again speaks :—

“ Well, here I am : as you see, a charlatan. I have done this to please you : you mustn’t blame me. As I told you, I am the well-known manufacturer of pencils. They are cheap and they are good, as I shall presently show you. Look here—I have a portfolio ! ”

The gentleman then lifts a large portfolio or book—opens it, and exhibits to the crowd three or four rough caricatures. He presently pretends to perceive doubts floating about as to the capability of his pencils to produce such splendid pictures. Suddenly he snatches up one of them, brandishes it in the air—turns over the leaves of the book—finds a blank page—then places himself in an attitude to indicate intense thought. He frowns ; he throws up his eyes : he taps the pencil impatiently against his chin ; he traces imaginary lines in the air ; he stands for some seconds with upturned face, rapt—waiting, in fact, to be inspired. Suddenly he is struck by an irresistible and overpowering thought, and begins to draw the rough outlines of a sketch. He proceeds with his work in the most earnest manner. No spectator can detect a smile upon that serious face. Now he holds the book far away from him, to catch the general effect,

marks little errors here and there ; then sets vigorously to work again. At last the great conception is upon the paper. He turns it most seriously, and with the air of a man doing a very great favour, to the crowd. The picture produces a burst of laughter. The pencil manufacturer does not laugh, but continues solemnly, to the sounds of his organ in the buggy, to exhibit his production. Presently, however, he closes the book with the appearance of a man who is satiated with the applauses of the world. A moment afterwards he opens it a second time ; puts the point of the pencil to his tongue, and looks eagerly at the people. He is selecting some individual, sufficiently eccentric and sufficiently prominent to be recognised by the general assembly, when sketched. He has caught sight of one, at last. He looks at him intensely, to the irrepressible amusement of the spectators, who all follow his eyes with theirs. The individual selected generally smiles, and bears his public position very calmly.

“For Mercy’s sake, do not stir!” the artist fervently ejaculates, as he sets vigorously to work. This proceeding, in the open street, conducted with the utmost gravity, and with the most finished acting, is irresistibly ludicrous. As the portrait advances towards completion, the organ plays a triumphant melody. In five minutes a rough and bold sketch has been produced, resembling only in the faintest manner the original—yet sufficiently like him to be recognised, and to create amusement. As the artist holds up the portrait, to be seen by the crowd, he again rings his little bell to silence his musical attendant in the buggy.

And now he dwells emphatically upon the virtues of his pencils. He declares that they are at once black and hard. He pretends, once more, to detect an air of incredulity in the crowd. He is indignant. He seizes a block of oak—informs his imaginary detractors that it is the hardest known wood—and, with a hammer, drives the point of one of his pencils through it. The wood is split, the pencil is not injured:—and he tells his imaginary detractors, that even if they are not in the habit of using pencils for art, they are at liberty to split wood with them for winter firing. All they have to do is to buy them. This is of course a very popular point in the performances. The next is the display, to the melancholy grind of the organ in the buggy, of a huge box full of silver money.

This box is opened and exhibited to the crowd as the astonishing result of these wonderful pencils. And then the charlatan goes through that pantomime which usually describes a man utterly tired of all the enjoyments wealth can give him. He seizes a handful of the money, and then lazily drops it into the box. He throws himself back and pushes the box from him, to indicate that he is tired of riches. At last he jumps up, and, seizing a five-franc piece, raises his arm to throw it amongst the spectators: but he is prevented, apparently, by a sudden impulse.

“Once,” he explains, “I threw a five-franc piece in the midst of my customers, when it unfortunately struck a man in the eye. That accident gave me a lesson which I should do wrong to forget to-day.”

So he closes the box; throws it to the bottom of

the carriage, and calls upon the crowd to become purchasers of pencils, which will never break, and which are patronised by the most distinguished artists. The droll thing about this performance is, that the pencils sold really are good, and that they actually did obtain honourable mention from the English Exhibition Committee in 1851.

The crowd having decided to purchase or to reject the merchandise of this extraordinary pencil-manufacturer, are soon drawn away to the occupant of another elegant carriage. Truly, this little licensed space at the back of the Louvre presents odd pictures to strangers.

This is a serious business. The crowd are listening to a lecture on teeth, and on the virtue of certain drugs for the teeth, the composition of which the lecturer alone knows the secret of—a secret that has been rigidly handed down in his family from the time of the ancient Gauls. He is a well-known dentist in Paris, and is in partnership with his father. The senior dentist remains at home to perform operations of dental surgery, which are the result of the remarkable advertising system pursued by the young man in the carriage. The business, I am led to believe, is a most flourishing one in the cité; and, when the father was young, he himself was *his* father's advertiser.

The scientific gentleman now haranguing the crowd is certainly the worthy representative of his parent. It is reported indeed, that the man is a skilful dentist. At the present moment he offers to prove his dexterity upon any individual present who may be troubled by a refractory tooth. He looks about eagerly for a

patient. Presently a boy is thrust forward to be operated upon. The poor little fellow is rapidly hoisted into the vehicle. To suffer the extraction of a tooth in an elegant drawing-room, or in the privacy of a fashionable dentist's apartment, is not a pleasant operation, even for a man with the strongest nerve; but to have a singularly happy illustration of the ills to which teeth are subject, drawn from your head, and exhibited to a crowd of curious strangers, is an ordeal from which all people, save philosophers and small French boys, would shrink with horror. The little victim, however, does not seem to be ashamed of his public position. He seats himself in the presence of the crowd, and allows the operator to fasten a towel about his neck, without displaying the least nervousness. The business-like manner of the operator is very amusing. He looks upon the boy only as a model. When the patient is fully prepared, he displays him to the crowd with much the same expression as that adopted by all parental exhibitors of wonderful little children. The operation is then performed, and the boy's head is rapidly buried in a convenient basin. This accomplished, the dentist, with an air of triumph, begins to sell his tooth powders and other toilette necessities, and to refer the crowd to his father's establishment. Occasionally, as an extraordinary attraction, this operator extracts a tooth with a drawn sword, while the organ plays loudly to drown the cries of the patient.

We pass the conjuror as an old and well-known friend, to enjoy the performances of the sergeant of the old guard. This sergeant is represented by an

old, care-worn looking poodle—a poodle that appears to be utterly tired of the world—to have exhausted all the enjoyments of two ordinary poodles' lives, and to take good and evil fortune now, with equal calmness. This canine representative of the old guard, is dressed—so far as his poodle's proportions can be adapted to those of the human form—in the regimentals of the old Imperial soldiers, and his long grey moustaches and shaggy beard, give to his head an appearance not altogether dissimilar to his assumed character. He stands upon his hind legs; he carries his musket with military precision; his most conspicuous fault, which he seems to have abandoned as quite insurmountable, is his tail. True it is a very little tail, but there it is, and he cannot help it. His master, or superior officer, is an old man, with silver hair, enjoying the advantages of a singularly even pair of silver moustaches. The master and the subaltern appear to have a family likeness. The master is dressed in a blue blouse and wide trousers, and wears a low, half-military cap. In his hand he carries a little drum and a whip.

The poor old guard as he walks round the circle formed by the people, to the time of the drum, looks wistfully at his officer, and sadly at his officer's whip. To describe the military movements through which the old guard passes would be as tedious to the reader as they are certainly tedious to the poodle; but the officer is really impressive. He is a serious old man, with a military severity in his look. He talks to the poodle in a voice of thunder, and comments on the slightest laxity of discipline, with tremendous earnestness. He reminds the old sergeant (who absolutely

looks conscious of his disgrace) that he is an unworthy representative of the Emperor's noble veterans. He tells him that he has twice been fined for drunkenness, and that he spends every sou he gets, in cognac. The sergeant looks very much ashamed. And then the anger of his officer rises to a terrific pitch. The end of the matter is, that the sergeant goes through all the forms of a military trial, and is condemned to be shot. The severe old gentleman then solemnly beats his drum, and with a mournful look, places the condemned soldier in the position he is to occupy while his sentence is carried out. The poodle, with a hang-dog look, then suffers his master to fire a percussion cap at him, and falls dead. But the business does not end here. The old man proceeds, with the utmost gravity, to bury the sergeant with military honours. Aided by a little boy, he carries the defunct slowly round the circle, and then sings a dirge over his grave.

After the funeral, the dog wakes to a lively air ; and performs a country dance with his serious old master. The animal is a character, but his master is a study. His age, his dignified manner, the imperturbable seriousness with which he goes through the military forms, the well-acted pathos with which he pronounces the old sergeant's sentence, the severity with which he rebukes any levity in the people, and the insensibility to ridicule with which he dances the country dance, are perfect in themselves. And, as he talks to the dog, his ingenuity in carrying round his discourse to money matters, and to the duty which his spectators owe to themselves, not to forget the little ceremony of

throwing a few centimes into the arena, is a point of dexterity which gives zest to the performance. He never appeals directly to the people, he seldom recognises them in any way; he talks *at* them in an incidental way, to the old sergeant.

Another public exhibitor claims popular attention behind the Louvre. He is said to share a goodly proportion of Parisian patronage, and to be rewarded with bushels of centimes. His performance is at once rapid and astonishing.

All he does, for his living, is to break a huge stone:—to crumble it up into little pieces. He begins by declaring to the crowd that this process may be performed by a blow of the hand. He presses the people about him to examine the stone he is about to crush, under one blow of his mighty arm: all are quickly satisfied that it is a solid mass. He places it upon a second stone; and, with one blow, of his fist, shatters it to atoms. The fiendish stare and the shout with which the performer accompanies the blow, are well calculated to give to the spectators a sense of the mighty strength called into action. This feat is, of course, both rapid and astonishing; and sagacious men have endeavoured to account for it by explaining that the underneath stone is so arranged that the whole force of the blow falls upon one point, and so acts like a sharp instrument,—a pickaxe for instance. This may be the right or it may be the wrong interpretation of the performance; but that it is a legitimate thing—that there is no cheat about it—I am well assured.

I might linger here to watch other performances of

this class ; but my attention is drawn to a gentleman dressed quietly and well, who has just taken his hat off, and is bowing to us from the high curb-stone. His expression is serious—even sad. He has an intellectual face ; that is, a high forehead, and a thoughtful look. People flock about him very fast ; evidently, he has something to say. He has a bundle of papers under one arm. He remains, while a crowd gathers, looking sadly round, and still holding his hat respectfully in his hand. Presently he murmurs a few words ; and, by degrees, bursts into an oratorical display, at once dramatic and effective. He is a poet. He felt the soul of poetry within him when he was an obscure boy in his native village. He longed to be known, to catch the applauses of the world. At last he resolved to travel to Paris : Paris, where generous sentiments were always welcomed ; Paris, the natural home of the poet. Full of youthful hope, he presented himself to a publisher, offering his poems. The reply he obtained was, that he was unknown. He went to a second publisher, to a third, to a fourth ; all were polite to him, but all rejected his works. He was in despair. Was he, with the soul of poesy burning within him, to starve in Paris, the cradle of poesy ? He was tempted often, in that dark time, to sully the purity of his muse. But he said, no : he might be poor, but he would be without stain. At last he was compelled to write songs for obscure cafés chantants ; but he should be unworthy to address that assembly, could he not assure it that all these songs breathed a high moral purpose. Well, one of these songs became the rage last year,

thousands of copies were sold. And what did the author get for that most popular production? Here the orator pauses, and looks sternly about him. Presently he raises his arm, and shaking it in the air, shouts, with the countenance of a roused fiend, "Tr-r-r-ois francs!"

After this burst, he proceeds, in a subdued voice, to describe his struggle. How he resolved to fight his hard battle bravely; and how, at last, stung by the neglect of publishers, he resolved to place himself in the streets, face to face with the Paris public. He knew that they revered poets. He believed that, while his muse was pure, he might appeal to them with confidence. They might judge from his language that he was no vulgar impostor; and he confidently believed that the time would come when it would be a subject of popular wonder, that the known man in that way once sought a public in the streets of Paris. To that time he looked courageously forward; and he only asked his audience to buy a number of his works which he had under his arm, and which might be had for fifteen centimes, in confirmation of all he had said.

And then the poet bowed to his auditors, who pressed about him to buy his works. There were other performers, but all of less refinement than the poet and the pencil-maker, who came to court public favour behind the Louvre. I passed by the poor boy whose face was covered with a mask, and who was shrieking to the crowd to enter his van and assure themselves that he was half white and half black. The unhappy little urchin had, of course, been subjected to the influence of lunar caustic.

I stopped once more before a very elegant close

carriage. From the horses' heads, tricolor plumes were nodding :—gilded mountings shone upon their backs. The carriage was painted pale blue, and appeared to be lined with rich yellow drapery. In the front of this vehicle, a short, awkward man was addressing the people. I learned his business, in a few minutes. He was an humble imitator of Mr. Eisenberg. He could not boast of the rich corn harvest his great prototype had gathered ; he had no testimonials from any peerage ; I am not certain that he had ever operated even upon a German Baron, yet he had much to say of his qualifications. He assured his hearers that the operation of extracting a corn was one of the most painless—not to say one of the most pleasant—imaginable. He invited any gentleman present, who happened to be troubled with these excrescences, to enter the salon at the back of his carriage, and there become a happy fellow. He would never be troubled after leaving the vehicle. I believe the operator had certain cures in the shape of ointments and plasters to sell ; but I did not wait to hear his story to the end.

Even the unhappy victim of lunar caustic was a being less to be pitied than the poor man who afterwards attracted my attention. Behind a little table, covered with shaving apparatus and writing materials, an intelligent-looking man was seated. His performance appeared to be very interesting to his circle of spectators ; to me, it was a most painful exhibition. The poor fellow had no arms ; yet I perceived, at a distance, that he was active enough with his paraphernalia. On joining his circle, I found that

he was using a foot instead of his hands; and that his dexterity with this member was most extraordinary. The foot was bandaged in white linen, leaving only the four toes (one was missing) exposed. With these toes he began the difficult operation of shaving; he took up the brush, wetted it, made a lather, rubbed it over his face, and then, bending back the razor, passed it over his cheek, and under his chin, with all imaginable ease. Having accomplished this, he took the stopper from the decanter, took up the heavy bottle of water and steadily poured it into the glass; he then lifted the glass to his lips, bowed to the spectators, and drank to their health. The next point was to seize a cap and hold it to the crowd, that they might conveniently cast their contributions to the performer. These toes then fired a gun; but not satisfied with this dexterity, they had been actually trained to thread a needle, and to write a good handwriting. I carried away the poor man's autograph, with me: his name was Joseph Legrand. Poor fellow, nature had played the wildest tricks with his anatomy, leaving only an intelligent head; and this head had evidently enabled him so to tutor the foot he possessed, as to make it perfectly subservient to his wants. It was absolutely like a hand; and was so nimble, that the spectator had some difficulty in believing that it was absolutely fixed at the extremity of the performer's leg.

The street folk who thus exhibit behind the Louvre, have thirty-six appointed places for public exhibition in Paris.

CHAPTER X.

THE PILGRIMS OF PARIS.

THERE are many ways of spending a pleasant holiday in Paris. Perhaps no city on the face of the earth offers so many ways. There are the *barrières*, where, for a few sous, the excursionist may sip his little glass of something nice, and enjoy his quadrille ; there are the *cafés chantants*, where more or less exquisite singing is accompanied by very vigorous violins, and where ladies in hat and feathers of the most formidable description, beg you to contribute some sous to the money-box. There are the Tuileries and Luxembourg Gardens, the Conservatoire des Arts et Métiers, the Louvre, and reading-rooms, where Dumas, and Sue, and Sand may be enjoyed for ten centimes. All these attractions present themselves to the mind of the Parisian holiday-maker. Then there is Versailles—not to mention St. Germain, and St. Cloud. Then the open-air concerts and dancing-dogs, and Fantoccini, and Ombres Chinoises, and Polichinelli, of the Champs Elysées, are tempting. But all these are sports or pastimes adapted to the afternoon or evening, or confined to summer weather. Therefore, for early morning

hobby amusement, the Parisian has no great variety of amusements. He cannot then play at dominoes or piquet: even billiards before noon are wearisome. Thus, to dispose of the morning, and at the same time to indulge that intense respect which the French feel for the dead—exorcismists, in hundreds and thousands, flock every Sunday to the great metropolitan cemeteries. Once at least in each week for the first year the near relation of a deceased is expected to visit the new grave, to decorate it, and pray for the soul that is gone. This custom is one that even the sternest philosopher, looking upon death from a material and physiological point of view, cannot wholly contemplate without some sympathy—without seeing in it some wholesome feeling, some affecting tenderness.

Yet, let a stranger take the omnibus (if he can find room in it) at the Louvre, which runs to the *Barrière Blanche*—note, by the way, the many fellow-passengers in mourning who will present themselves; and arrived at his destination, let the said stranger turn to the left, and follow the crowd on the way to the great cemetery of Montmartre, and he shall see curious sights—odd incidents of mingled grief and festivity—that will puzzle him. The scene, taken as a whole, is a very gay one. Here are hundreds of children romping; stalls devoted to the sale of sweetmeats; restaurants offering a formidable list of plats at wonderfully low prices; and beer and spirit shops, which appear to come in for their fair share of public patronage. But turning from the festive part of the scene, and directing his attention to the row of shops on his right, the

stranger will at once perceive that he is in the neighbourhood of a great French cemetery. From the first floor to the ground, arranged in patterns the most fantastic, and in colours the most grateful, are hung thousands of immortelles, or circular rolls of baked and dried flowers. And, judging by the brisk trade that is going on, the stranger will not think that the supply exceeds the demand by a single immortelle. Here is a grey old man chaffering for a black one, which he examines minutely, slings upon his arm, pays a few sous for, and goes tottering on his way. There is a spare pale man, in deep mourning, with a pot of roses under one arm, holding a little child, also in black, by the hand, and examining a white immortelle most anxiously—the child playing with those near her the while. His story is plain enough to the coldest heart. It is one of a home made desolate, while yet the warmth of youth and hope were about it; it is a story often read and known, unhappily—yet which we all read again when the opportunity offers—because there is a fascination in the strong sympathy it arouses, as we enjoy the tears we shed at mimic grief upon the stage. The pale man has bought the white ring meantime, and slings it, with a sad kind of playfulness, about his child's arm—and they go their way.

A hearty, lively *bonne* approaches the immortelle magazine. She looks in a very business-like manner, at the varieties of eternal emblems about her, as she would look at a cap-ribbon. Some of them have long pious sentences, worked in black flowers, upon a white or yellow ground. These are probably more expensive

than the plain offerings. Yet the *bonne* examines them, and finally becomes the excited purchaser of one, on which the words "*à ma tante*" are legibly worked. But this bargain has been effected only after long and vivacious discussions with the young man who accompanies the *bonne*. The affair once terminated, however, the lady's obvious lover politely relieves her of the trouble of carrying the offering "*à ma tante*," and gravely loops it upon his arm. Thus laden, he escorts his mistress to take refreshment, and then to the grave of her aunt. Then a number of very business-looking people become purchasers, and with their grave offerings hanging upon their arms, go chattily on their way.

But there are grave decorations, or pious emblems suited to the purses of all. Thus, while the little *grisette* seriously trips to Montmartre with the simple yellow *immortelle*, the flourishing tradesman's wife carries with her to the cemetery a pot of choice flowers, and a cross covered with green leaves, upon which white roses are studded at intervals. A stout gentleman of fifty may be seen toiling on his way, with a flower-pot under each arm—a young man is loaded with garden-tools—a little girl carries a plaster cast of the infant Samuel—a little boy bears a white figure of the Virgin. All are on their way to the cemetery. Some are laughing and talking—some are in mourning and are very grave—a few, from whose mourning the linendraper's creases have not yet worn off, are crying as they go on their weekly errand.

Thus, every Sunday, the choked cemetery of Montmartre receives its thousands of pilgrims—

nearly every pilgrim bearing his offering to the grave he visits. There is little that is remarkable about the cemetery, considered as a garden, or viewed with an eye to the picturesque. It appears to have been laid out in long, straight walks, intersecting one another at frequent intervals, and usually, at right angles. Thus the groups of graves are generally in the form of oblongs; and visitors are enabled to examine the stones and altars very conveniently. And this examination is not without its interest. The curious expressions of grief are often touching; sometimes, to the cold eye of a stranger, altogether ludicrous. The wealthy friends of the dead have raised small chapels above the family vaults; and herein may be seen, in miniature, all the decorations of a Catholic church—even to the stained windows behind the altars, and the silver or gold candlesticks; the splendid vases, and the more costly images of the Virgin. Curtains are drawn before the doors of some of these chapels; and behind these curtains the stranger does not seek to intrude, for possibly the relatives of the dead are praying. The graves of the poor are generally marked by huge, black, wooden crosses, upon which immortelles, in various stages of decay, from the bright chrome offering of to-day, to the shrivelled emblem of three months ago, swing in the wind. Other graves are little gardens, where the earliest flowers of the spring, and the latest autumnal blossoms, may be always found. These are not the least interesting graves at Montmartre.

The children's graves, however, are at once the most curious and the most touching. Here, as at Mont

Parnasse, are the faded playthings, the withered wreath worn at the confirmation, the coral necklace that was about the little one's throat when it walked in procession from its school—the winner of a school prize—a prize not the least sweet of those that lie in the human way from childhood to infirmity. There is very little pride of grief perceptible in all these strange aids to memory of the dead. And when (as on any Sunday at Montmartre he may) the foreign visitor suddenly comes upon two people—the mother in tears, and the father sadly proceeding with his work upon a grave—watches till they are gone, then reads that the earth below contains the body of their child, and then notes the fresh offering that has been deposited, and the effect of the tender hands that have wandered over the spot,—he cannot see in all this, even in its childish expressions, anything at all ludicrous. These are cares for the grave, churchyard sentiments, not liked nor practised in England; but it is impossible to see all that every Sunday exhibits at Montmartre, and not be touched with a kindly feeling, and an honest sentiment almost of affection, for the pilgrims who carry their dried emblems thither.

Here is a serious, middle-aged man, vigorously sweeping away all the dead leaves from his family tomb, while his wife and daughter stand by, ready to plant above the remains of some dear lost one, the flowers they have bought near the barrière. They all kneel and pray; adjust their flowers; and quietly, reverently, leave the spot. But, wherever the stranger turns, he will find kneeling pilgrims.

Very old women are here, too, in close communion

with the spirit of the scene ;—so very old are some of them, you would think it hardly worth their trouble to make their way back to their rooms at the further faubourg of Paris. On all sides are black dresses and hat-bands. Some are devoutly crossing themselves ; others are reading epitaphs. On all sides are pilgrims, thickly clustered. They people the narrow avenues between the little chapels ; they are squeezed between the tombstones ; they may be seen crowding in past the great iron gates ; they are equally perceptible in the distant perspective of the long, straight walks. One spot, however, appears to be attractive only to the poor, and a very strange picture does this same spot present.

The reader should know that those graves at Montmartre, which are not bought “in perpetuity,” are let for fifteen years, at the expiration of which term the unconscious tenant is ousted from his resting place, and conveyed to a spot whither all fifteen year tenants are removed, under similar circumstances. This spot is a very conspicuous and easily accessible one, it being the point to which many broad paths converge. And here a stranger, who has been wandering thoughtfully down one of these paths, is suddenly struck by the sight of a huge pyramid, perhaps thirty feet high. All about it, in various attitudes, and at various distances, are groups of poor people,—some in bright holiday costume, others in states betokening the want of many of life’s necessities ; some kneeling and praying fervently, others curtsying and crossing themselves. These are the poor pilgrims of Montmartre ; and they have come to pray at this great

common grave, because it contains the bones of some one who was once possibly kind and good to them, or whose errors in regard to them, they have long ago forgiven, remembering and cherishing only his better ways.

At a distance, the pyramid which covers this dead men's common land, appears to be built of earth and rubbish. Approach it, and it is discovered to be a huge mound of the decayed immortelles sold at the Barrière Blanche. This immense pyramid is, then, the gathered offerings of thousands of pilgrims, all mouldering here, yet receiving fresh supplies every Sunday. A near inspection discloses all kinds of little injured images, half-buried under the withered flowers. Above all, lie bright, fresh, flowers, just thrown upon the pyramid.

The stranger, wearied at length with the fantastic phases of grief he has seen in the cemetery, follows the crowd back towards the Barrière. It is now four hours past noon, and the cafés and restaurants are beginning to assume a gay aspect. Continuing to follow some of the wanderers from the cemetery, he will be led up a steep hill to the windmills he can already see far above him. He will notice that many of the pilgrims are still about him; that their faces are relaxing. He climbs a steep ascent, at length, by a tortuous path, and finds himself upon the summit of the heights of Montmartre. Here, for two sous, he may, at his ease, enjoy a splendid view of Paris. By turning to the left he may secure the excitement of a swing,—a pleasure which, he will perceive, several of the pilgrims are enjoying. On his right, he will find

some airy gardens, laid out like country tea-gardens ; but offering, in the stead of tea, currant-water, barley-water sweetened, and other popular Parisian drinks. When he has sufficiently amused himself here, he will descend, and return to the Barrière. Here he will find, in full operation, all the gaieties of a Parisian Sunday evening. Brisk parties of grisettes tripping into lively saloons to eat their three *plats* (which four people economically order for two), and enjoy their tumbler of Mâcon and water ; sober family groups also on their way to dinner with their children ; omnibuses undergoing the rigid inspection of the active authorities ; musicians exercising their art with indifferent success ; loud vendors of liquorice-water, in sky-blue cocked hats, all full of life ; while the great graveyard of Montmartre close by echoes along its dark avenues the laughter of the pilgrims of the morning. Many of them will possibly be at the Barrière ball to-night, and will return to the heart of Paris by the last omnibus. Many possibly will enjoy a little supper when the ball is over, and then quietly walk home. In none of these holiday folk can the stranger realise the serious men and women who, when the sun was high in the heavens, did duty as pilgrims beside the graves of Montmartre. Yet they did this duty honestly, he hopes and believes.

CHAPTER XI.

A FRENCH WAITER'S STORY.

ONE thing is very certain. French waiters may make less money than English waiters; may go out to more fêtes; display their graces more frequently at balls; be more susceptible of the tender influences of waitresses; but one thing is certain, and this thing is the indisputable fact, that they contrive, as a rule, to save more in a year than an English waiter puts away in ten years.

Every Paris visitor is familiar with the men in black, whose cloth is guarded by long snow-white aprons reaching to their boots; who pass all their waking moments outside the Boulevards cafés, with a napkin under one arm, and a choppe, or a demi-tasse, in the right hand. We all remember their quiet, quick manners; their dexterity in pouring the coffee over the cup into the saucer; the air of reckless yet practised extravagance with which the brandy is dashed into the little goutte glass, nearly filling the silver tray upon which it stands. And then, too, have we not all remarked the care with which the knowing customer empties the saucer and the tray, as well as the cup and the glass? These are certainly points of observation which must be familiar to the least observant of Paris visitors.

Well, these Paris waiters are a peculiar race. As they nearly all come from one province, namely Alsace, so they nearly all adopt the same manners. They are all quick ; can carry an infinite number of coffee-cups without dropping one ; walk steadily, or run at a pet pedestrian's pace, with their load ; tell you the last news about the war ; have a light, sparkling answer for any lively question you may address to them ; are familiar without being rude ; and receive your contributions to the waiters' box placed upon the counter of the café, without servility and with politeness. They do not generally linger about you like an English waiter, pretending to wipe the table, or asking whether you are sure you do not want anything else, when the fee has been forgotten in the settlement of the account. On the contrary, the fee appears to come upon them as an unexpected pleasure ; and is gracefully dropped into the waiters' box, to be divided at the end of the month. Take the waiter at the Frères Provençaux, and contrast him with the worthy fellow who supplies

- coffee to the medical students at the Closerie des Lilacs, and place between the two the official who served you with Punch à la Romaine at Mabilles, and you will see that they very closely resemble one another. Perhaps the apron of the specimen from the Frères Provençaux is a little whiter, a connoisseur in fabrics might discover that it is a little finer, than that worn by the servant of the Closerie : but speak to the three ; call their capacities as waiters into practice, and you shall discover that the student's garçon is as graceful and as informed as the man who waits upon milords. You will find all three of them in

excellent spirits, invariably ; working hard from the dawn of day far into the night, without repining ; adding regularly some economies to the caisse ; nay, the most fortunate of them may be known to some of their visitors as carotteurs at the Bourse. They all talk excitedly about their dignité d'homme. They will reply firmly to any hasty word addressed to them by a guest ; when he insults them, they place themselves immediately on an equality with him, and talk to him loudly, and refuse to wait upon him. This independence does not quite please many of the foreign guests who visit their masters' establishments.

A waiter, whose story is that which forms the main point of this paper, told me one morning, his eyes flashing fire as he spoke, that he had been insulted by a Swedish officer. It appeared that this waiter had been told to light the officer's fire every morning. One morning he had lit it, but it had gone out before the Swede made his appearance. Whereupon, a loud ring at the bell was given :—the waiter answered it. The Swede was in a terrible passion, and threatened to strike the careless servant. "Whereupon," said the waiter, "I felt the blood flowing very fast to my ears. And I said to myself, 'Stop, stop, monsieur le capitaine.' I folded my arms, and looking steadily at him, exclaimed 'Strike!' He turned upon his heels instead, and went direct to complain to my master. I followed him, and complained to. I suggested that he had better go to another establishment, if he had yet to learn that no men were slaves in France. My master fell in with my suggestion, and offered to make *out his bill* on the spot. But he preferred staying,

and I let him get his fire as he pleased from that day. He thought, as I told him, that his uniform dazzled me, but he was very much mistaken." And as the waiter told this story, his lip quivered with anger. His *dignité d'homme* was extremely hurt.

Antoine was really and truly an excellent specimen of the Parisian waiter. He could carry plates burning with soup, without spilling a single drop; he could have filled a coffee-cup, blindfold; he could hear the faintest hiss of a guest; and he could tell you the amount of your "addition" in a few seconds. You might forget his *pourboire* four or five times, yet Antoine was always civil, always obliging; if you were accompanied by a lady, he had always a stool near for her feet. If you were undecided as to the nature of the refreshment you would take, Antoine was full of excellent suggestions. Would monsieur have a choppe; or some *groseille*; or an ice half vanille and half strawberry; or some cognac and seltzer-water, or a pistache? Antoine could recommend the cutlets with asparagus, or the turbot with capers. He knew exactly the strong points of each day's bill of fare. And the master he served was an excellent master, having been an excellent servant in his time. He had begun life as under-cook in a nobleman's house. In this capacity he had saved a good round sum of money. With this money, aided by a friend, he had taken a restaurant, and was, when Antoine became his servant, worth one hundred thousand francs. Nor did Antoine look upon his master's fortune as anything extraordinary. It appeared to him to be the necessary consequence of a prudent

waiter's life; since not one in twenty of the Paris waiters spends all he earns. The great majority are important depositors in the *caisse*. And Antoine, it was easy to see, was not an insignificant contributor himself, as his story will prove.

He began his life at a very early age as a boy in a public school. He was compelled to rise at five in the morning, and to work hard at the drudgery of the establishment, until six at night. In this situation his wages amounted to two hundred francs a year. Out of this sum he contrived to save one hundred francs annually. At last, after four or five years' service, he managed to improve his condition by obtaining the situation of *sommelier* in a large restaurant. The *sommelier*, it should be observed, is charged with the important duty of giving out the wine from the cellar. He filled this post, as Antoine would fill any post of trust—with honour. He was a favourite with all the patrons of the establishment; and when he left, to become head-waiter in a still larger establishment, his departure was accompanied with the regrets of his fellow-servants. It was as head-waiter to this great restaurant that we first knew Antoine. We can bear witness to his agility, to his grace, and to his good humour in this capacity. He interested us from the first. The careless confidence with which his fortunes and misfortunes were freely told to his guests; the pleasant anecdotes he always had ready; the judgment with which his advice as to the evening's amusement was given; these, and other agreeable points, combined to recommend him as a favourite waiter. But then Antoine was not educated to

remain during his life the contented distributor even of refreshment so attractive as Punch à la Romaine. He was formed for better things, and better things he has done.

For some two or three years we had lost sight of Antoine. He had left the establishment of which he was the ornament; and in answer to our inquiries, the master sulkily told us that he knew nothing about him. There had evidently been a quarrel. Well, we gave up Antoine; and months passed before the memory of the good fellow was re-awakened.


One spring morning, attracted by stories we had heard about the chiffoniers of Paris and their haunts, we strolled towards the Montagne Ste Geneviève. There, in the narrow lanes at the back of the great library, we were soon satisfied. The chiffoniers were to be seen in every stage of intoxication, even to the helpless drunkard lying upon his back in the gutter, that trailed its black course down the middle of the alleys. Rags hung from every window; heaps of bones were at some doors; and at others soles of old boots were stacked. Here women were sitting sorting rags and paper, and watching the drunken revels of their mates; there, huge waggons were being loaded with enormous bales of chiffons. Being, unfortunately on this occasion, furnished with a nose, we did not long remain on the Montagne Ste Geneviève; on the contrary, we hastened forward, past the Place Maubert, only glancing into the horrible dark hole called Le Drapeau, where the chiffoniers spend their money in a fearfully adulterated spirit, which they call canfre, on our way towards the Barrière des

Deux Moulins. Our road lay through one of the poorest parts of Paris; through choked-up alleys, and past people of wretched aspect, generally. Still hastening onward through a narrow street where the wine-shops were separated from each other only by occasional friperie and bric-à-brac stalls of the lowest class, we were suddenly attracted by a sign that looked English. To see the rude representation of a very fine old oak suspended above a doorway in this situation, was a strange sight. The establishment, regarded from the street, had certainly not an inviting aspect. We suspected at once that it was a chiffoniers' ball-room. Under the sign there was an announcement to the effect that the price of admission was six sous, which six sous included consummation to that value. We approached the entrance; it had all the melancholy air about it that generally pervades a place of entertainment when no entertainment is going on. But the rows of copper vessels were bright; the little brandy and wine measures were in excellent condition; the floor was neatly sanded; and a clean, bright-eyed woman was sitting at work behind the huge leaden counter. A voice from the room behind called to her. Surely, we thought, that is a familiar voice. Within a minute afterwards, Antoine made his appearance, with a huge bundle of keys in one of his hands. He was very pleased to see us, and began the story of his life from the point at which he had stopped when he used to talk to us at the great restaurant.

The story was one of which Paris furnishes many *parallels*. The prudent waiter as inevitably becomes

the prosperous restaurateur, as a royal cornet rises to the rank of colonel. Antoine, in his twenty-seventh year, had saved more than two thousand francs. He had, moreover, made a reputation for sagacity in conducting his master's business; and his friends were ready therefore to help him, when he declared himself strong enough to start on his own account. Antoine stated his intention of leaving his master; whereupon his ungrateful employer spoke angry words, Antoine replied—as every Paris waiter replies to angry words—by standing upon his dignity, and declaring his intention of leaving at once. He carried out this threat; and three or four weeks afterwards he was the contented owner of *Le Vieux Chêne*.

Le Vieux Chêne was an establishment of very modest pretensions;—and Antoine, as he talked to me in his morning dress of coarse cloth, protected by a green baize apron, had not the prim air which characterised him when he served the master of the great restaurant. But Antoine was evidently on excellent terms with the world:—it was easy to see, without asking him the question, that his speculation was successful. I inquired why he had not chosen a more fashionable part of the town. He laughed and his wife laughed, as he told me, with a knowing look, that fortunes were not made out of the rich, but rather out of the working men. He then insisted that we should take a glass of good Strasbourg beer with him; and while his boy was gone to the cellar to fetch it, he volunteered to show us over his establishment. We followed him down a dark passage, through a second bar which opened into a long, wide, low



room. It was in terrible confusion :—the **rush chairs** were piled in stacks ; the forms were lying about, and the floor was wet.

“ Here we can stow away nearly five hundred people,” said Antoine, leisurely planting himself against the wall, and twirling his bunch of keys about.

We asked him for the details of his business, and he glibly gave them to us in the following words :—
“ When I first took this place I was very nervous. People didn't come. Nobody knew anything about it—but I was patient. I knew that, by degrees, I should get my customers. I gave them good things to drink ; treated them well ; and sent them away content always, when they did come. So every visitor honoured me a second time, and brought a friend—until, now, we have scarcely room for them. I am thinking how I can enlarge my space. Every visitor pays six sous at the door, except the soldiers, who pay nothing. They never pay anywhere. I don't know exactly why, but it seems to be their privilege. Then all the visitors who dance, pay three sous for each country dance—except the soldiers who pay two sous only. It is just the same with the tobacco. For instance, I go to a tobacconist for a parcel of tobacco. I pay sixteen sous for it. A soldier goes : he pays four sous for the same quantity, and with his four sous gives a warrant to the shopkeeper, which upon being delivered at the proper government office, is accounted for. All people favour the military. For instance, again, for my musicians, I prefer two or three performers of a regimental band. I get them cheap. I give them only twelve francs a month each, yet they

are glad to get leave from their commanding officer to come to me.

"My principal patrons are working men. You are surprised to hear that a working man can afford to pay six sous entrance-money, and three sous for every dance. Yet it is easily explained. Say he gets twenty francs a-week: well, he lives upon ten francs, and ten francs remain to spend in pleasure. This is how they generally manage till they marry, and then good-bye to balls. We admit only decently dressed people; for instance we rigidly exclude women who wear handkerchiefs on their heads, for these are always of the lowest class. The chiffoniers and chiffonnières never come here, they go to a ball on the opposite side of the lane, where there is no rule about dress. You should see this *salle* on a Sunday evening in the winter:—there is only just room to dance. Sometimes on these evenings I take as much as one hundred francs for dance money alone. I consider it a good night when my receipts are about five hundred francs. I take even more occasionally. On Shrove Tuesday the visitors danced all night; and it was difficult to get rid of many of them at eight o'clock the next morning."

Antoine would have gossiped on about his contemplated improvements; the excellent beer his guests got *en consommation*; and his conviction that establishments like his paid larger dividends than those devoted to the elegant classes. Antoine had good reasons for his opinions; since he had a large deposit in the *caisse*—the result of his reign under *Le Vieux Chêne*! We are assured that this young fellow who

began life at fourteen as a drudge and shoe-black in a boy's school, is now, in his twenty-eighth year, putting aside at least seven thousand francs a year! It is said, in the neighbourhood, to be quite a picture, when Antoine and his wife resign their cellar keys to their servants, and sally forth, in holiday attire, to spend a day at Versailles, or to breathe a little fresh air in the Bois de Boulogne.

Antoine, however, has fairly won the bunch of keys which he twirls about his sturdy finger: and may those keys be long bright in his hands! His fortune, though far from the most brilliant of the waiters' fortunes now dazzling various quarters of Paris; is, nevertheless, we have no doubt, one sufficiently substantial to content the gay fellow, who cheerfully gave us a bottle of his best beer, and directed us kindly on our way to the Barrière.

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CHAPTER XII.

PARIS WITH A MASK ON.

BEFORE every Lent the people of Paris enjoy three days of the most hilarious madness. The general love of extravagance displays itself fearlessly ; and the most extraordinary combinations of the elegant and the grotesque are the result. The eve of the carnival is the fête-day of the washerwoman. On this day these ladies parade through the capital in elegant carriages, and dressed in the gayest costumes. As illustrations of perfect washing they are without fault. In the evening they have a grand ball, from which their partners return, to prepare for the morrow's revelry. A stranger who has read vivid pictures of carnival gaieties ; who has realised the happy custom of throwing splendid bonbons from the elegant balconies of Rome—in short, with a mask on—will naturally be in a state of some excitement on the eve of a Parisian carnival. And the shops will have prepared him for a grotesque sight, and extravagancies of humour to be found only on the banks of the Seine. He has already observed many kinds of horrible masks lying in heaps in shop windows ; false noses with a huge bunch of carrots marked upon them ;

noses turned about like a corkscrew, and suggestive of the indecision of the owner, on the relative merits of the Roman and the pug; noses of proportions altogether irreconcilable with any human face. Then there are terrible Gorgons' heads; faces with livid green eyes; countenances of ghastly hue; physiognomies displaying the Parisian turn for horrible practical jokes upon the regular features of an ordinary man's head. The extravagant caricature of the masks is only equalled by the wild imagination displayed in the fancy costumes. These dangle about you as you pass through the narrow streets, and arrest your attention by their bright colours. The arcades are filled with elegant dominoes; the Rue de Seine exhibits disguises at once effective and cheap. The stranger who has watched all these preparations; who has read the glowing words printed upon gay posters; who has heard the rapturous anticipations of "charmants" balls; and who has learned from the waiter of the hotel, that he, on one night of the carnival, will figure in a princely suit; must inevitably rise on the first carnival morning, with some haste. He will be awoke, probably, by the loud voice of the Parisian patterer, crying the authentic account of the route to be followed by the great procession of the "Bœuf Gras!"

The day is very bright: the streets swarm with holiday people. The omnibuses are crowded; blouses are to be seen in cabs, very frequently; the open places are gay with snow-white caps and bright shawls; children may be counted by thousands. But where are the masks? You are directed to the

Boulevards, or to the Champs Elysées : besides, the day is young. A stroll for two or three hours, relieved by a demi-tasse at the Rotonde, gives proper age to the festival. It is now quite the afternoon. Every Parisian has had his breakfast : in other words, it is three o'clock. The Boulevards are certainly crowded ; but again comes the question—where are the masks ? Let us confess to a decided disappointment. We stroll about discontentedly. Presently, however, we hear a great uproar in the distance. People shout, press forward, laugh, and gesticulate, as a large open cart approaches, crammed with nine or ten young fellows dressed in indescribable costumes. Each mask is addressing the crowd from his point of the vehicle, and occasionally throwing sweetmeats amongst them, to enjoy the confusion of the scramble. The wild fun passes rapidly on, surrounded by a shouting crowd ; and, by degrees, the noise dies away. The maskers look very like a group of supernumeraries dragged from the burlesque of a third-class theatre.

We still stroll. We meet little children in all kinds of fancy costumes. Little girls with powdered hair, and white three-cornered hats ; boys, by hundreds, in regimentals. The Champs Elysées are crowded—but the fancy dresses are, almost without exception, upon children. Everybody looks happy—anticipating the fun of the carnival :—but where is the fun ? It is true that, amid the yells of a crowd of boys, a couple of maskers have passed, consisting of a woman dressed in man's clothes, and a man in petticoats ; but surely there is nothing very funny or very commendable, or even harmless, in that ! The

Luxembourg gardens are crowded, but the masks are very few even here—where the decorum of stiff people is replaced by the free and easy habits of students. After all, the procession of the fat ox is the great event of the carnival—that is, of the carnival seen in the streets. Accordingly, crowds of people assemble at the great points where this wonderful procession is to halt, and the crowding is nowhere, perhaps, more severe than before the entrance to the Luxembourg Palace. The official paper has announced that the procession will reach the Palace gates between two and three o'clock; but the Parisians appear to know, from experience, that an hour and a half's grace is not too much consideration for the corpulency of the ox. At about half-past three, therefore, people begin to cluster near the gateway, and soldiers are posted, with their bayonets fixed, along the approaches. Nurses come pouring from the bright gardens of the Palace, with their gaily dressed charges: soldiers, of every regiment, stroll—their hands deep in the pockets of their wide trousers—to the attractive spot; blouses appear in groups fourteen or fifteen strong; boys climb into the recesses of the palace windows, and shut out the light from the orange trees within; vendors of gingerbread and liquorice-water advance noisily upon the scene, and the gay equipages of Napoleon's senators dash, at intervals, into the courtyard of the senate house.

Drums in the distance proclaim the approach of the great procession. At the extreme end of the Rue *Vaugirard* the gleaming spears and helmets of the

cavaliers are distinctly visible. The peppery little soldiers near the Palace gates push the people back most energetically, as two very gay footmen—one in sky blue satin edged with lace—walk forward, with a stately step, heralding the coming splendour. Of course the next personage of importance who approaches the gateway is a most formidable drum-major, with his enormous stick—about the size and shape of an ordinary curtain-pole! Thirty or forty drummers obey the waving of this impressive bâton. These are all dressed in the regimentals of drummers of the last century. Behind them follow cavaliers of all ages—well dressed, and well mounted. Next on the list are men bearing banners; these are followed by Druids—one Druid, by the way, with a short pipe tucked in his belt. Behind the Druids rolls the fat ox, gaily decorated, and led by three attendants, one of whom is a butcher in his working dress. The procession is closed by a grand car, in which a number of ladies and gentlemen are seated, dressed to represent Industry and other virtues; followed by some cavalry, to keep the crowd off.

This procession is marshalled in the court-yard of the palace; a lively air is played by its band: a present is made or expected, and then it files off, amid the cries of the crowd, down the Rue de Tournon, on its way through the Champs Elysées, to the slaughter-house, near the Barrière de Roule. Yes, to the slaughter-house! For, after all, those noble cavaliers with their dancing plumes; those classic Druids with their solemn looks; those representatives of virtues, in the car, are butchers and butchers

daughters ! The procession consists entirely of butchers—and starts from, and returns to, a slaughter-house. The pageant owes its existence to the spirit of advertising, even at this expensive rate, shown by a famous butcher in the Rue St. Honoré. It is he who generally bids the highest for the prize ox ; and the fact that it is his ox which is generally paraded through the streets during the carnival days, is said to bring him considerable custom. It is also reported that he generally presents the choice parts of this famous animal to his important customers.

The fun of the old carnival, however, has now retired from the open streets. The police still annually issue stringent regulations, prohibiting all manner of indecorum, and restraining the old humourists, who used to throw their yearly bag of flour from their window, upon the crowd below. Men will not mask in the streets with a policeman at their heels. But, give them free way in a dancing-hall, and it soon becomes obvious that the old spirit of masked revelry exists still in great vigour. From the Empress at the Tuileries to the dame de la halle—free, for the day, from the cares of her stall near the fountain—the people of Paris array themselves in fancy dresses for the evening dance. This year, for instance, the Empress wore a Greek costume ; my hotel waiter was, for the night, Richelieu—at least. And thus, when night has fairly closed in, Paris presents a remarkable aspect. People of all degrees are flitting about quickly, in every conceivable variety of costume. The better classes are seen only through citadine windows ; the poorest, in their white calico

trimmed with red ditto, trudge rapidly on foot. Balls are going on everywhere, and the morrow's sunrise will reveal hundreds of dukes and princes returning to their apartments on the fifth story, with pale faces and wild hair. The French understand masks. They generally act well. They take a joke good-humouredly, and even enjoy it. I have to add that they are thoroughly accustomed to masks—and nowhere is life more wildly burlesqued behind them than in one of those out-of-the-way balls frequented by the poorer and less conventional classes.

The room in which the ball is held has been described as a curious combination of the style disintegrated from Herculaneum, of the cave of Ali Baba, the accessories of Paul Veronese, and the cheap dining salons of the Palais Royal. On all sides are flags and curtains of different colours—on all sides ludicrous devices, associating the classic with the modern—an umbrella and a sword being gracefully hung across a shield, for instance! In this ball-room are assembled crowds of people, dressed in costumes the most incongruous—in caricatures the most absurd. Here is a pair of cavalry trousers walking gravely about, surmounted by a helmet; the hands of the wag inside protruding through the pocket-holes. This figure is named Colonel of Carbineers in Lapland. The crowd presents so many ridiculous figures that it is difficult to select illustrations. But here is a man who has confined his attention solely to his hat. Certainly it is a wonderful affair. Worked upon it, the student may trace a rich course of philosophy. Here, as a central design, are the Death's head and cross bones,

and around are grouped the four aces, knuckle-bones, a pipe culottée, and a portrait of Henry the Fourth. In the neighbourhood of this remarkable hat, wanders one of the many Mesdames de Genlis figuring about Paris on these festive nights, with her hands in her trousers pockets. The Hospodar of Wallachia approaches (almost buried under the folds of his enormous turban) the Bride of Lammermoor, who repulses his advances with becoming dignity. The pale bride is dressed in black velvet. A young Albanian goes quietly about with a pair of false moustaches, to judge of the effect of the natural pair he hopes to enjoy some day. He jostles the Mameluke, who is troubled with a huge pair of gendarme's boots. The master growls, then presses his way forwards through the dense throng of pierrots, hussars, Knights of Malta in formidable numbers, Trojan warriors, troubadours without voices, and statesmen of all ages without places! The ladies, however, do not offer that variety of costume which their cavaliers present. With the exception of a stray milkmaid or two, and the discreet dominoes, the fair ladies are generally pierrettes or débardeurs. The reader may imagine this wonderful carnival company forming the first cold quadrille. Here is the Hospodar of Wallachia leading off the Bride of Lammermoor; and Count d'Aubusson arm in arm with the Domino Noir, and Madame de Genlis takes her hands out of her pockets to enjoy a quadrille with the Mameluke.

The first quadrille is a quiet affair; the gentlemen confine their attention to a few heavy steps by way of

testing the floor; but wait for the third or fourth quadrille, when carnival humour is at its height. The *pas seul* is then the great opportunity. One gentleman throws himself deliberately on his stomach—his *vis-à-vis* jumps over his body, and throws himself down in the same position by his side, and then the humorous pair twirl rapidly round to the time of the orchestra, and at the proper moment return to their feet with a spring. But the performances of this ingenious couple are outdone by the two gentlemen on the right. While one absolutely stands upon his head during his solo time, his opposite neighbour brings him the two ladies, holding each in the air, at arm's length.

The carnival humours have now fairly begun. The hussars throw aside their shakos; the Hospodar relieves himself from the weight of his turban; the Roman takes his helmet off, and with it his dignity. Barley-water and other sweet drinks are consumed in great quantities. The whirl—the madness—becomes absolutely terrific before supper-time.

Supper is served as wildly as the dances have been danced. Galantine, soup, wine, at once sour and abundant; savoy biscuits, grouped in twenty different ways, and with various sweetening essences bearing most dignified names; and bits of poultry in remarkable sauces, make up the supper. As the wine is imbibed, as the consumption of punch becomes general, as the champagne corks keep time to the rising songs, and as the daylight breaks upon the revellers, the scene becomes a most extravagant one. Everybody is talking, and nobody is listening. Twenty

distinct songs are being sung at the same time, until one singer with a tremendous voice, obtains a hearing. He shouts some popular song; the revellers form in lines, and, singing the well-known air, make a triumphal march round the room. The proceedings terminate usually with a galop like a hurricane!

And then the Hospodar may be seen looking mournfully out of a cab window at the good country-people who are going with their loads of vegetables to the Halle; at the milk-women sitting under the great gateways, serving all comers (for the Paris milk-women do not call upon the customers); at the hungry crowds of men and women, holding all kinds of utensils, and pressing about the doorways of the great restaurants, waiting for the hour when the broken fragments of the great dinners of yesterday shall be distributed to the poor; at the crowds of men who are removing the little heaps of rubbish from the doorway of every house. The Hospodar is happily in time for the opening of his patron's shop, so he puts away his heavy head-dress, smoothes his moustache, and prepares for the business of the day. He may, however, be a tradesman on his own account; in this case, he probably saunters off to the nearest café—to dominoes and absinthe!

The reader has to imagine a hundred balls—all on the model of that just described, and all going on at the same time; also balls of greater pretension than the foregoing, with more splendid dresses, and held in the fashionable quarters; with the great ball at the Tuileries at the head of the list—and he may realise a *faint* picture of the gaiety of a carnival night in Paris.

The street display has dwindled to a mere melancholy pretence. Paris has ceased to wear a mask out of doors, but in the salons, in the great assembly rooms—on ball nights at the Italian Opera—then people in various disguises give way to their mirthful spirit, and, from a privacy which is safe from invasion, flirt and laugh to their heart's content.

In the streets, the butchers with their prize ox enjoy a monopoly of public favours, but the stranger must not think that Paris no longer wears a mask because the mask is not worn on the Boulevards, or in the fashionable walk of the Champs Elysées.

CHAPTER XIII.

CHIFFONS AND CHIFFONIERS.

JUST now chiffons are golden property—and the chiffonier's story, always attractive, gains additional interest from the high price of the manufacture to which he furnishes the raw material. A neighbourhood in which the chiffoniers of Paris have taken up their quarters in a strong body is that steep ground at the back of the St. Geneviève Library, known as the Montagne Ste Geneviève. They may be seen issuing from the narrow alleys which cover this hill, of an evening, with their huge baskets upon their backs, their lanterns in their hands, held close to the ground that nothing may escape them, and their iron hooks ready to catch any chiffon that may come in their way. The alleys whence they issue, are built upon the side of a steep hill, so that from the upper end of them a curious view of the chiffonier's habits may be had—at a glance. An open sewer trails its black current down the centre of each alley; the houses on each side are generally old, and tottering, and dirty, ornamented with rags drying, or exposed for sale at every window. The ground floors are generally occupied by master chiffoniers; and here, early in the morning, the lowest class of the chiffoniers come and sell their load of rags

and paper, metal, glass and bones—in the lump, without giving themselves the trouble to sort them.

The master chiffonier's establishment does not present an inviting aspect, even to the least fastidious of observers. It generally consists of the two low ground-floor rooms. In the front room heaps of sorted rags, and boots, and paper, and old glass, lie in different directions; but rags and paper are the great commodities in which he deals. The window frame of the shop has not a single pane of glass in it, as a rule—but the sash-bars serve for the suspension of dirty rags, indicative of the trade carried on within. Near the door, or sometimes in the centre of the court opposite, are huge scales, upon which the chiffonier's goods are weighed. At one window there is only broken, rotten cordage to be seen; at another there are heaps of old articles, including torn knapsacks, bodies of old dolls, well-darned trousers, and other miscellaneous articles, all having seen good service. Some of the master chiffoniers and sellers of 'friperie' have signs over their doors, as—"Au Bon Marchand de Chiffons!"

Here, too, are the chiffoniers' dram-shops and the chiffoniers' lodging-houses. In the day-time the former are crammed with customers, and the latter are almost deserted. All about these courts children are playing in the dirt!—drunken chiffoniers are lolling to and fro!—women are sitting upon the stones sorting the day's load of chiffons and chattering together—men are under little sheds slashing the leather off heaps of old boots, and piling up the soles in stacks against the walls; and huge waggonⁿs are

being loaded with enormous sacks of rags and paper. We noticed, on one occasion, two chiffoniers firmly clasped in one another's arms, rolling over and over, along the centre of one of the courts, at about two o'clock in the day, helplessly drunk. They did not appear to attract particular observation, and were not even noticed by an old woman who was sitting close at hand, peeling apples into a huge basket. Probably they would make their way to their lodging-house—possibly to "Le Bon Nicholas," which appeared to be an important one; where, if they have not furniture of their own, they get a straw mattress for four sous a night. The prudent, or rather comparatively prudent, chiffonier, however, rents his room, where he sorts his rags, and lives. Some, who are very poor, sleep upon their chiffons; others, who have a little forethought, and are moderate drinkers of wine and brandy, have a little furniture. For instance, in one of these courts (Rue de la Montagne Ste Geneviève) we met a chiffonier who paid 135 francs a year for an unfurnished room on the fifth story. A chiffonier with his wife, or female companion, cannot, however, get a little cabinet to themselves to sleep in under two francs a week, at the present time, owing to the extensive demolitions now in progress in the quartier St. Marceau.

By the Place Maubert, in the Gros Caillon, or at their various places of resort in the Banlieue; as Grenelle, Vaugirard, and Plaisance, the chiffoniers appear to pay rents equalling those of the Montagne Ste Geneviève. But then the rent is their chief item of expense—for, according to a chiffonier whom I ques-

tioned—a man who knows his “metier” ought to be able to live off his heap of rubbish ! I took the following statement of a prosperous master chiffonier, living on the Montagne. Of course he was tempted to represent the gains of his customers at a higher rate than that at which they may be fairly rated—as will be seen by the counter-statements of the chiffoniers themselves, from whom I afterwards obtained important information. The master chiffonier’s statement was to this effect :—

“ I arrived in Paris when I was only nineteen years of age ; and worked as a fur-dresser, earning usually from 25 to 30 francs a week. I could neither read nor write. The dissolute habits of my companions drove me from the fur-trade : for though we earned good wages, our laziness and dissipation made us poorer than workmen who gained much less than we received. I then engaged myself as a kitchen servant at a school. My wages were 200 francs a year. I worked from four in the morning till six o’clock at night ; and then I wanted to learn to read. But my master prevented me ; telling me that if I had leisure he would give me more work ; and even took away my candle that I should not study at night. This was at the Seminaire de Vangirard. In three years I had saved 300 francs out of my wages. With these savings I started as a buyer of rabbit skins, and other things. I was in the streets six years. By degrees I saved enough to get a little shop—and to be able to wait with my skins, for a good market ; and at last I became a master chiffonier.” In answer to my inquiries as to the average daily earnings of a chiffonier, he

replied that he believed an active man got two francs a day. He said "the better class of chiffoniers have their streets, and station themselves in them at three o'clock any morning, to await the expulsion of the rubbish from each house. They had the right allowed them, by some landlords, to enter the houses and remove the rubbish themselves, in order to obtain the first examination of it. The police will not allow the inhabitants to throw out their rubbish overnight—that is before eleven o'clock. At this hour all chiffoniers must leave off work. Their great time is from four in the morning until eight, at which hour the carts have cleared the streets. Therefore at nine o'clock, the chiffonier who does not trouble himself to sort his basket-load, has done for the day; or at all events, till the afternoon, when he may possibly make a little excursion. Those chiffoniers who have no streets, but who wander about and frequent the more populous parts of the Banlieue, are called *coureurs*. The chiffoniers pick up bones, paper, broken glass, and china; old cord, leather, and old metal of every description. On their return home they generally set to work to sort their load, few of them being quite so improvident as to sell without sorting. Some of them, who have good streets, live comfortably, and have their own furniture. They go out on Sundays, and frequent the cheap balls—particularly one in the Rue Mouftard. Their great enemy is drink. The chiffonier's living costs him nothing. His chief gains are spent upon cheap brandy;—upon brandy so bad that the current appellation of any bad spirit is '*Eau-de-Vie, de Chiffonier*.' While Louis Philippe was king, the

chiffoniers had a revolution. A dust company started carts to collect the rubbish from the houses, but the chiffoniers were too strong for the intruders. They destroyed their carts wherever they appeared, and threw some of them into the Seine.

“Few of them are married—most of them live with women. Those who have children, turn them into the streets, as little chiffoniers, at eight years of age, and teach them to drink and smoke.”

This was in substance the master chiffonier's statement. It was not to be fully relied upon, I knew; for the master chiffoniers, who are chiefly Auvergnats, have a reputation for rapacity and unscrupulous trading. Their poverty in their native province, is supposed to sharpen their appetite for money, when they arrive in Paris. I therefore made inquiries among the chiffoniers themselves; and with the view of avoiding an exaggerated picture of their condition, I selected for my purpose a male and female chiffonier, living together in their rented rooms, at Grenelle. These rooms consist of two apartments, three and a half metres by two and a half: the walls are white-washed, but are now dirty. In the first room are the chiffons and other materials collected by the pair, with the two mannequins or baskets, in the centre. All the rags and paper were sorted, and lying in distinct heaps. The inner room contained a broken-down bedstead, a dirty kind of cupboard, and two remarkably rickety chairs. Over the fire-place a piece of broken glass was nailed to the wall. These articles included all the worldly possessions of the pair. When I arrived, the woman had just returned with her heavy

basket at her back. She was very dirty, and had the regular chiffonier's handkerchief bound tightly round her head. She was a middle-aged woman. She was not at first inclined to receive us very kindly; our visit seemed to be suspicious in its object. But I soon re-assured her by giving her the money to send for a litre of wine; whereupon, drinking it at intervals from two glasses with the feet broken off, and which, consequently, it was impossible to stand anywhere, even if there had been a table to stand them upon, I drew from her the following story of her life. I should remark also that she was loth to give all the details; that, even in her fallen state, it was painful to her to measure the distance between her condition and that of her friends. It was only by dint of dexterous questions that I contrived to elicit the whole truth from her. Her story ran thus:—

“I was born ‘enfant de troupe.’ My father was a soldier, and my mother was a cantinière. When I was only fourteen years of age, I ran away from them in company with a boy of fifteen. He married me as soon as I had completed my fifteenth year, and I was a mother six months afterwards. My husband became a soldier in the 1st Regiment of Lancers, and I became cantinière in the same regiment. I lived with him twenty years, and had ten children by him. I left him because he had an intrigue with our servant. Afterwards I got my living by selling brandy to the troops on the Champ de Mars, during exercise-time. By this employment I gained a franc for a morning's work.”

Upon the details of her life at this time, she

would give little or no information. It appeared to have been of an immoral character, however; and that vice which was now strong upon her, seemed to be traceable to this passage of her history. She lived near the Invalides, that she might see her father, who was a pensioner there; and it was near the Invalides that she had met her present companion for the first time. This was seven years ago, and she had lived with him ever since. She had not been with him many days before she resolved to do her share towards their support. So she became a chiffoniere; and although her friends had often tried to turn her to another course of life, she preferred the chiffonier and her own daily search for chiffons.

It was only a few days after she had been about the streets (and she felt very timid and ashamed at first) that a lady accosted her in the Rue Verneuil, and asked her how long she had been in the business. This lady interested herself in her life, and offered her all the rubbish from her own house, to which she often added useful scraps. Since that time she had enjoyed the monopoly of the Rue Verneuil, and was known to all the housekeepers in the street. They greatly favoured her, because, if by chance, she found any valuables in the rubbish, she knew the house to which it belonged, and returned it to the owners. She and her companion went every morning to the Rue Verneuil, and returned from it between eight and nine o'clock. She had been recommended by her doctor not to drink so much, but she couldn't help it. One of her sons was an officer in the 1st Regiment of Lancers, and she had a

daughter married and settled in Lyons. She described to me her meeting with this son. One day, according to her statement, she was carrying her mannequin near the Barrière de l'Ecole, when she saw her son coming towards her, with a lady on his arm. They were on the way to a ball. She tried to avoid him, but he insisted upon recognising her, and, seizing her by the hand, said—"Mother, how do you do?—you surely know me." And then he sent the lady on to the ball alone; took her into a restaurant at hand, and left her, giving her some money—"which," said her companion, who returned at the moment with his load of chiffons, "she spent in wine. I picked her up dead drunk."

Her companion was a good specimen of the chiffonier class. He wore a decent blouse, and looked altogether a more careful and cleanly person than the woman. He began to help her at once to consume the wine, and then the pair ate their breakfast, which consisted of broken food—as cold potatoes, bits of bread, and other crumbs from rich men's tables. As the wine warmed them, they became more confidential; and the man shortly told me his history.

He was originally a carpenter; then he became a servant at a chemist's; and then, being without employment, he took to the business of a chiffonier. The pair agreed that they earned, on an average, thirty sous each a-day. They appeared to be very fair samples altogether of the vices and the virtues, and to illustrate the habits, of their class. The man wore his police medal No. 3,875, and his notion was that there were about 5,000 or 6,000 registered chiffoniers about Paris.

But altogether, including the immense numbers of children (whom the police refused to register), he believed the chiffoniers could muster 20,000 strong. Every registered chiffonier had his address stamped upon his medal; and when he moved, was ordered to give notice of such removal, at the police-office. He and his companion were always good friends when they were both drunk together; but when one was drunk and the other sober, they fought invariably. When they first began, they lived in a lodging-house near the Place Maubert, where, for a palliasse, they paid four sous per night; but lodging had risen since that time; now their rooms cost them eighty francs a year. They were more comfortable now; the chiffoniers of the Place Maubert slept five or six in a little room and without covering. Sheets were charged extra. He believed the coureurs made about a franc a day—sometimes thirty sous. He sold his chiffons by the hundred kilos.

We have here the statement of a couple in a fair way of business. That there are chiffoniers who make three francs a day as well as chiffoniers who average little more than fifteen sous, the evidence of other chiffoniers very clearly proves.

It is to be regretted that when the Chamber of Commerce framed their important statistical report on the Industries of Paris in 1847-8, they omitted altogether that large class of the population which derives its support from occupations carried on in the streets. To have exact information on the habits of this—usually most vagabond—class, is to be able to deal more effectually than before, with the crime

and the mendicancy of a great city. In making an inquiry into the state of industry in any country or town, the main object in view is surely to better the condition of those people who are unable to gain a living by their labour, and to lighten the load of public burdens, by weeding from the social body, the lazy and the vicious who prey upon it. And assuredly the laborious work of M. Horace Say and others, giving no account of the population who gain their living in the streets ; neglecting the collectors of raw materials, the annual value of which is counted by millions of francs ; is one essentially defective in its plan. This defect adds considerably to the labour of any inquiry into the vagabond class, since it leaves the inquirer without any authoritative guide as to the number of the chiffoniers working within the fortifications, and gives no means of estimating the value of their labours. I have endeavoured to supply this part of my subject, by making careful inquiries from chiffoniers living in different quarters, and by comparing their statements in order to frame a correct estimate.

The chiffoniers of Paris, who have been the object of much curiosity to foreigners, are perhaps the most drunken and the most brutalised class of workmen in Paris. This follows, in part, from their calling, which is one adopted only under circumstances of the most pressing distress, or to gratify a vagabond spirit which makes steady and continuous labour insupportable. All my inquiries have tended to prove that a workman becomes a chiffonier only under the pressure of *disadvantageous* circumstances ; and it is probable

that the revolution of 1848, which threw about 30 per cent. of the working population out of employment, did more to strengthen the ranks of the chiffoniers than in the natural course of things, they would have been strengthened twenty years hence. Many of the chiffoniers with whom I have communicated, trace their fall in the social scale, to the distresses of the summer and autumn of 1848; yet so great is the fascination of a vagabond life—of a life wherein no master save Hunger plays a part—that hardly one of the men I talked to, wished to return to settled employment. Some of them had held excellent situations, in which they must have been used to comforts which the life of the most successful chiffonier cannot possess. Still the life is a free one, and not without its excitement, since it is a perpetual game of chance. On any day the chiffonier may pick up a silver spoon or a five-franc piece, or even a greater prize.

For instance, I met a chiffonier in a dram-shop on the Place Maubert, who had just made a lucky hit. He had found a new boot; and, in the course of his rambles, met another chiffonier who had picked up the fellow boot. This rather suspicious circumstance led the two to make mutual offers for the boots; but it turned out that neither of them had sufficient money to satisfy the demand of his companion. It was at last agreed that they should play a game of cards for the odd boot—the winner to be possessor of the pair and, in consideration of his fortune, to stand a litre of wine, to the loser. The man I met was the winner, and had just sold his prize to a wine-shop keeper for

eight francs ; which money, he added, he should conceal from his female companion, and spend on his pleasures. I may add a second instance of a chiffonier's chances. One man, known all over Paris as the Chiffonier Philosophe, picked up, while looking for chiffons, a purse of 1,300 francs. He was so elated with this good fortune that he could not resist the temptation of describing his prize to a companion, giving this companion, at the same time, one hundred and fifty francs as the price of his secrecy. His companion refused to be silent for so small a sum ; the philosopher declined to increase it ; whereupon the companion lodged an information at the Prefecture of Police, and the philosopher was condemned to spend six months at Mazas, and to refund all that remained of the 1,300 francs. When I saw the philosopher he had just left prison. I endeavoured to get into conversation with him, but he would not answer a word—and surlily told me not to speak to him. The philosopher had grown discreet in confinement.

Silver spoons and bank notes, however, are the prizes of a chiffonier's life ; and these he is compelled to lodge at the Prefecture (under pain of imprisonment), where they remain for one year, at the expiration of which term, if they are not claimed, they belong to the finder. His ordinary prizes, those upon the sale of which he usually lives, consist of rags of all descriptions, paper, old bits of metal, bones, old leather, and broken glass. He differs, however, from the English rag-picker essentially ; since his calling is favoured by the regulations of the police. In England *dustmen* regularly remove the rubbish from people's

houses; in Paris the inhabitants cast out their rubbish into the street late at night or early in the morning, to be picked up by the carts, before nine o'clock. The chiffonier is, therefore, favoured by circumstances—not a load of rubbish being carted throughout the capital which he has not turned over with his probing-hook.

His usual plan is to secure for himself the monopoly of a good street. He effects this by obtaining the favour of two or three tradesmen in the street; by obligingly saving the inhabitants the trouble of removing their rubbish, which duty he is only too happy to perform for the sake of the first inspection thereof; and by returning to the various householders to whom he is known, any articles of value he may discover in their rubbish. In this way he obtains a footing in a street; and, if it be a good one, he will generally confine his operations to it, or nearly so. Some of the inhabitants give him broken bread, cold potatoes, and scraps of meat; others reserve for him their torn paper and rags. To work this street thoroughly, it is necessary for him to be at his post between three and four o'clock every morning, for at this hour the early risers throw out their rubbish. His work is continuous from the moment of his arrival up to eight o'clock, at which time the carts clear the street; and then he returns home, if he be a prudent chiffonier, to sort his load. If, on the contrary, his love of brandy have mastered every other consideration, he makes his way at once to the master chiffonier, casts his chiffons into the scales, gets their value, and goes off direct to the nearest dram-shop.

where he spends the greater part of it in *sou gouttes*, or lounges off to a cheap *Barrière*, as the *Barrière de Sèvres*, where he eats his broken food, and gets his litre of wine for eight or ten sous. But the prudent chiffonier returns to his rooms near the *Place Maubert*, or at *Grenelle*, to sort his load. He carefully separates the linen from the cotton rags; distinguishes between old and new bones, and white and green glass; and throws each separate kind of treasure into its proper heap. These heaps he sells by the 100 kilos to the merchant chiffonier; managing, generally, to make his sales once a week. Old iron, and brass, and copper, he sells at once; and the chiffonier generally counts the produce of these findings as so much pocket-money, to be fairly set aside from his usual earnings for brandy, or "*camphre*," as he calls it. If the chiffonier be really a vigorous workman, he will sally forth, after he has sorted his morning's load, about two or three o'clock, and look for stray chiffons; or he will take a turn in the evening, with a lantern, which he holds close to the ground. The dexterity with which, aided by his long iron fork, he scatters a heap of rubbish; sends the glare of his lantern upon it, and rapidly digs his instrument into the bits of use to him, throwing them over with a jerk into the huge basket slung at his back, are points to be observed any night in the byways of Paris.

It is easy to distinguish a prudent chiffonier from one who has sunk to the last point of degradation. The prudent man has a large well-built basket, is dressed in a decent blouse; the abandoned fellow has only a *ragged sack*, and even picks up the chiffons with his

fingers: and the earnings of the chiffonniers exhibit a difference as wide as their personal appearance. I found one chiffonier (but then the poor fellow worked day and night) who earned, usually, his three francs a day—this man, of course, sorted his chiffons—but, after careful inquiries, I arrived at an average of the chiffonniers' earnings; and this, taking into account the vast numbers of women who follow the calling, I am convinced does not exceed one franc a day. Some get only fifteen sous; and those who do not sort their loads seldom go beyond the above average.

They inhabit the low lodging-houses in various parts of Paris; but their head-quarters, undoubtedly, are within the twelfth Arrondissement, in the vicinity of the Place Maubert. There are groups of them also at Grenelle, at the Barrière de la Villette, at Monceaux, near the Barrière de Clichy, at Courtille, in the Gros Caillou, and at Plaisance and Vaugirard.

After some trouble—for I found all the chiffonniers extremely suspicious, and very loth to give details as to their habits and gains—I procured the following list of prices, as those given by the master chiffonniers and old-iron merchants for the treasures of a chiffonier's basket:—

- Linen rags, per 100 kilogrammes, 20 to 25 francs.
- Cotton rags, per 100 kilogrammes, 10 francs.
- Coarse woollen rags, per 100 kilogrammes, 6 francs.
- Merino rags, per 100 kilogrammes, 15 francs.
- Fine woollen rags, per 100 kilogrammes, 40 francs. *
- Old iron, per 100 kilogrammes, 10 francs.
- Cast iron, per 100 kilogrammes, 10 francs.

* This is woven into cheap cloth.

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| Brass, per livre, 14 sous. |
| Copper, per livre, 24 sous. |
| Tin, per livre, 14 sous. |
| Lead, per livre, 4 sous. |
| Zinc, per livre, 3 sous. |
| Paper, per 100 kilogrammes, 8 francs. |
| Raw bones, per 100 kilogrammes, 8 francs. |
| Dried bones, fit for handles, etc., per 100 kilogrammes, 16 francs. |
| Old boots, per dozen pairs, 6 sous. |
| Common glass, per 100 kilogrammes, 8 francs. |
| Best glass, per 100 kilogrammes, 16 francs. |
| Window glass, per 100 kilogrammes, 3 francs. |
| Bottle glass, per 100 kilogrammes, 2 francs. |
| Broken gilt china, per 100 kilogrammes, 15 francs. |
| Kitchen stuff, per livre, 3 sous. |

To show the importance of the chiffon trade of Paris, it is only necessary to state that the twenty-one master chiffonniers, employing from one to ten workmen (sorters of chiffons) each, who gave in their returns to the Chamber of Commerce for 1847, exhibited dealings, for that year, to the amount of 1,670,000 francs; and I am assured that these figures do not represent half the value of the chiffons collected in the streets of the French capital.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE FOUR SEASONS IN PROSE.

IN a book published lately in Paris, the author asserts that, so bad is London weather, we disconsolate cocknies remain at home eleven days in every twelve, reading "*Les Saisons de Tomson*." If we have seasons, they are only distinguishable, through the thick fog, by the cold that seizes upon us. Another French writer informs his countrymen that the twilight of continental nations is equivalent to English daylight. Certainly houses suffer less from the wood which the French burn than they suffer from the coal we English use; but then an English room in winter is warm, whereas a French room in January, is not a very comfortable place. But without replying to French libels on our climate, we may remark that the Parisians have an extraordinary class of street hawkers—hawkers dealing not in brooms nor brushes, nor 'coco,' nor wonderful blacking—but in the four seasons! These are not the seasons "*de Tomson*"—they are not even suggestive of the poetic—they are the seasons in the driest possible prose: and to these remarkable hawkers I propose to devote the space necessary for a picture.

Let the reader at once set aside his old notions of a ruddy-cheeked Autumn—a blooming Spring in short petticoats—a grey-bearded Winter blowing his icy fingers—a happy Summer lolling amid flowers. These are images for which the reader may be referred to the scrap-book upon his drawing-room table. For assuredly, the seasons in which our Paris hawkers deal, are not expressed in this poetic language—they are rather the seasons as we greedily watched their development when we were at school.

We all may call to mind the comfort we took to ourselves when winter, curling up the golden leaves in his benumbing fingers, threw them in showers upon us, as we rehearsed the holiday song about the playground, and thought of the few weeks that lay between that hour and Christmas—Christmas, with its accompanying wealth of oranges, and grapes, and roast chestnuts—its snug fires! We all may call to mind, how, when weary of the cloudy days under which the buds about our home swelled ready to burst with the first kiss of gentle Spring, we romped to find the strawberry plants shutting up their flowers, to prepare the fragrant strawberry—to see the petals that fall from the cherry-trees, disclose the little germ of the black heart! We all remember the days when first the woman charged with the lucrative duty of carrying eatables about the playground for sale, twice weekly—displayed in her basket the early plums and pears of summer; and then, as the higher points of the chestnut trees grew yellow, and the days drew in, and we went out picking stray ears of corn, we may all remember the great apple bargains, that worthy and

most welcome purveyor offered us. Well, in some sense, the hawker of the four seasons, notes the years run by in Paris after our schoolboy fashion.

He is a most prosaic man. To him the splendour of May-days suggests but the ripening of the arpents of strawberries for which he has contracted with a gardener at Sceaux; and the first fall of snow, brings gladly to his mind the approaching time of heavy profits, to be drawn from New-year's Day. For the time which precedes New-year's Day has generally been to him a very flat time,—when, after crying 'mendiants' or figs, almonds, and nuts about the streets all day, he has seldom returned home with more than two francs profit in his pocket. The bright seasons, however, dawn for him, when the snow falls, and people huddle themselves over their wood fires. Through these seasons I have followed him, and I now propose to conduct the reader on his footsteps.

Before beginning the trade of hawker of the four seasons, Alexandre Mullet, whose experiences I have to describe, was compelled to apply for a permission to the Prefecture of Police. This permission was handed to him, together with a medal, at a cost of twenty-four sous. The permission, after describing Alexandre's name and address, authorised him to frequent the streets of Paris in the capacity of hawker of the four seasons. Armed with this authority the good fellow next turned his attention to the hire of a barrow, and of one for his wife; took some modest rooms at the yearly rental of one hundred and eighty francs; arranged his scraps of furniture in it; and then prepared to invest his small savings, in goods.

But in addition to his house-rent, Alexandre found that he was compelled to pay six francs a month for the nightly shelter of his barrow. These barrows, it may be observed, resemble very closely those used by the hawkers of London; but if they differ in any respect from them, it is that they are sometimes more gaily painted. To buy one of these barrows costs usually between forty-five and fifty francs. Thus prepared, Alexandre began his year, and steadily, though with uncertain profit, sold the four seasons. He related to me his experiences, dating from the 15th of December, 1853.

By permission of the present Emperor of the French,—who has in many ways lightened the load of the people getting their living in the streets, and who has improved the public markets,—the merchants of the four seasons are permitted to station themselves along the Boulevards, from the 15th of December to the 15th of January annually. Thus stationed they serve the vast population of the capital with those new year's offerings without which no friend visits his neighbour on the first of the new year. On the first day of the year the consumption of oranges must be, in Paris, something enormous. Oranges represent both winter and spring to Alexandre. Stationed at his little stall on the Boulevards, he opens the year by selling oranges (which he has bought at eighty francs per case) at ten sous each. The price at which he usually buys this fruit throughout the winter and spring varies from twenty to eighty francs. It is only at a time like the new year that he could *afford eighty francs* for a case of oranges; for it is

only at this time people will give ten sous for a single orange.

It was a hard but a lucrative time. It was not pleasant to sleep under the stall on the cold nights of winter ; but it was pleasant enough to make eight or ten francs clear in a day. He and his wife had sold the first two seasons of the year, that is, winter and spring—in other words oranges—to very decent people. They calculated a profit of five francs each as a very good day's work ; but then there were times when they made barely more than thirty sous, as when the weather was bad, or the fruit-market was above their price. For under ordinary circumstances, oranges could not be sold in the streets dearer than four sous each. The prices ranged between one sous and four sous ; but most were sold at two sous. Paris has never seen, according to Alexandre, an orange season like that of 1854. In 1852 no merchants of the four seasons looked upon oranges as representing their cold Winter ; but of late years this fruit had become marvellously cheap—cheap as in England—so that it might be had in every street—outside every theatre. All old Paris visitors remember that eight years ago oranges were to be found only in stray grocers' windows ; and that in the provincial towns of France they were as rare almost as pomegranates. But this year Alexandre's Winter and Spring consumed no less than eighty cases of oranges. He bought sometimes four hundred francs' worth at a time. One of his great places to sell this fruit was, before the hospitals, when poor people were going to see their sick friends, on Thursdays. Many of them would buy oranges to

carry to the lips of the feverish. He also reaped a good harvest from the theatres. I have often remarked Alexandre, with his companions, stationed outside the Variétés or the Vaudeville; their barrows illuminated with candles surrounded by red paper shades, that threw a rich tint upon the piles of golden fruit below. And very warm and cheerful did those golden heaps look, contrasted with the cold, white snow upon which the barrows rested. Far away into the spring, the approach of which Alexandre only knew by the increased price and decreased excellence of his golden fruit, the good hawker of the four seasons wheeled his richly laden barrow about the Paris byways, avoiding a stoppage before any greengrocer's shop, and steering clear of the neighbourhood of the markets; for the police are very strict with the hawkers of the four seasons, on these points. In their printed permissions, they are specially warned against competing with resident greengrocers, or with people who occupy stalls in the market. They are also ordered to wear their medals in a conspicuous position. Woe to the unfortunate fellow who wanders into the street, having left his medal at home! At once the police seize his load of fruit or mendicants, and sell it by auction, for the good of the authorities. This punishment is heavy, since it costs the poor hawker four or five days before he can reinstate himself at the Prefecture. Alexandre has, I believe, been more than once in the clutches of the police, in this way; though, of course, I could not ask him the details of his transgressions.

It is when spring is running into summer that

Alexandre experiences the evils of a slack time. The oranges have become woolly and tasteless, indicating the approach of the strawberry and cherry season. Alexandre, at this period, watches the weather with intense interest. He is eager to be selling his third season; meantime he contents himself with the purchase of a few "Noix Americains," or Brazil nuts, which, being a great novelty in Paris, sold freely enough for a short time. Already Véry's window glows with choice fruits; but between Véry's window and the hawker's barrow there is a tedious interval. This is to him a "morte saison." Anxiously enough he pays occasional visits to Sceaux to watch the progress of the vast fields of strawberries which are there ripening for the enjoyment of the Banlieue, and the cheap neighbourhoods of Paris. Presently, at the gates of the Luxembourg, and under various gateways, adventurous women appear with little sticks, upon which four or five cherries are bound, and which are offered to passing children, at one sou per stick. The hawker's third season is now at hand. A few fine days will redden the fruit of Sceaux, and his gardener will appear with his first consignment of the hawker's Summer.

Alexandre was glad enough when the first consignment arrived. He sold them very dear at first; but the weather kept fine, and in a few days he was selling the Summer vigorously. He could hardly keep pace with the supply; for he and a companion had made a bargain to take all the produce of two arpents, so that if their gardener brought in, one morning, three hundred livres of fruit, they were

compelled to take it all, and to pay for it at the market price. It became hard work to sell all; but when they had made five or six francs out of the day's load, it was their custom to sell off the remainder at cost price to get rid of it; for it could not be kept till the next day. Alexandre considered it a good day's work to get his eighty or one hundred livres of strawberries at six sous per livre, and to sell them at eight sous. Alexandre and his wife made a contract last year to buy two hundred livres of strawberries per day during six weeks, making their supply for the height of the summer season, eight thousand four hundred livres of strawberries!

Less prudent hawkers of the four seasons, frequent the Halle, or Marché des Innocents, and bargain daily for their one hundred pounds of cherries: but these men cannot buy on terms so advantageous as those which Alexandre enjoys. Strawberries vary, even from one day to another, from thirty-two to twenty-two francs per hundred livres. Cherries are cheaper; varying, for the hawkers, at the Marché des Innocents, from twelve to fifteen francs per hundred livres. The summer is, however, a bright time for the hawker of the four seasons. He knows how the year rolls on by the prices of the fruit he sells. Thus when the strawberries fall off, and cherries are no longer plentiful, he feels that he has seen the most lucrative part of his Summer, although apricots remain to be dealt in. He buys apricots by the hundred, so as to sell them, with a good profit, at one sou each. But one sou is a high price for an apricot *from a hawker's barrow*; he even gets small ones that

he is able to dispose of, with profit, at four for one sou. And lastly, his Summer is certainly on the wane when he stalks forth with his first load of peaches. Peaches he can dispose of, if they be very fine, at three sous each; but he has indifferent ones upon his barrow at two liards a-piece. The Summer is sold when the peaches give way to Autumn—in other words to plums!

Yet Alexandre holds that the autumn is a lively season for him—when, if the weather be fair, he may possibly clear his four or five francs a day. Plums are consumed, in vast quantities, throughout Paris; and the hawkers of the four seasons pander to this taste very successfully. They generally buy their supply of plums by the hundred livres, and sell them by the quarteron, or quarter of a hundred. The finest plums do not fetch more than four or six sous the quarteron, which always numbers twenty-six. But then there are those little mirabels (or small yellow plums, which make the well-known preserve so popular throughout the French capital), which they dispose of at two sous, and even at one sou the quarteron. The Autumn yields generally, a goodly harvest to the hawker of the four seasons; for the “poires d’Angleterre” (a long yellow pear known as the earliest pear in France) succeed the plums at once. But then when the pears advance to the hawker’s barrow, he feels that his third Season is advancing rapidly. He already thinks of the dull days when only mendiants will be upon his barrow, and when, earning only thirty or forty sous a day, he must patiently wait the 15th of December. He

counts even the days of the season as the pears decrease in price, from one sou each to two, three, or even four, for a sou. Then apples are offered, to close the season; and walnuts, at one or two sous the quarteron, tempt the pockets of the street-folk. Even these fail, as the first fall of snow covers upon them, and people lay in their winter supply of wood, and the hawker closes his fourth Season. It would appear from the foregoing description, that the hawker sells the four seasons to an immense profit, and that his business is much more remunerative than that of a skilled artisan. But up to this point little has been said of the fines which harass his career; of his love of holidays; of his propensity to drink.

Alexandre, according to his wife, "*aime bien faire la noce!*" "*Faire la noce,*" let the English reader understand, is a term about equivalent to "going out on the loose." And it appeared from some inquiries I made on this point that the hawkers of the Four Seasons are very fond of this kind of relaxation. After a few weeks of successful hawking, two or three will meet together, go off to a *barrière*, have a noisy wine party, and enjoy all kinds of excesses, returning home after two or three wild days, having spent seventy or eighty francs. All this time the wife is wondering and anxious at home, or at her work, with her barrow, in the streets. I know that Alexandre's wife saves money unknown to her husband, lest he should '*faire la noce*' with her economies.

The police regulations which bind the hawker of the Four Seasons are stringent; but properly so, for the protection of the public. In the first place, it is

difficult for the hawker to give bad weight, since he is liable to inspection at any moment. Any police officer whom he may happen to pass, may ask him to exhibit his scales. The officer tests them; and if they are not equal, the hawker's goods are confiscated, and he is mulcted in a fine of fifteen francs. This fine is also imposed if his weights are false. The confiscated goods of the hawkers are sold by auction. The police fine for stopping unnecessarily in the streets varies from one to six francs, according to the frequency or gravity of the offence; but then it should be remembered that when the fine is only one franc, the expenses amount to six francs and a half. Before the present reign, the fine for stoppage was nine francs. The classes from which the ranks of the hawkers of the four seasons are recruited include most of the corporations liable to the chômage, or slack season. The ranks of the female hawkers include women who have enjoyed every kind of luxury under the protection of rich sensualists, who loved the freshness of their youth, and forsook them when the Spring-time of their life was past. It is calculated that the Four Seasons are sold by nearly 5000 hawkers, in Paris and the Banlieue.

If the Paris visitor would enjoy a new scene, he should be up at six o'clock some fine summer's morning, and wend his way to the Halle! Here, on the Marché des Innocents, he will find one of the liveliest and strangest sights of the French capital.

The huge square is crowded with country people, with their blue suits, their bronze faces, and their broad straw hats. Heaped about them in all directions, are

all kinds of fruits ; waggon-loads of strawberries and cherries ; stacks of artichokes ; immense heaps of asparagus ; mounds of cabbages and lettuces ; cauliflowers by thousands ; and little cabins crammed, to the doorways, with melons. Not an inch of pavement is to be seen anywhere—all is covered with a thick coating of trampled vegetable matter. Every hand is stained with the ruddy tints of the cherries and strawberries. Each woman who has strawberries to sell, or little, neatly packed cases of peaches or apricots, calls you "*mon petit monsieur*." The fine fountain throws its waters into the pale rays of the rising sun, while the country people creep farther up the steps which surround it, covering each stage with ripe fruit (to display it the more effectively), till the waters appear to rise as the centre-piece of a gigantic dessert.

Crowds of customers choke up the narrow avenues between the country people, and chatter over the bargains in a patois so volubly spoken, and so unlike the accents of the Parisians, that the French language is, in their mouths, hardly intelligible to the citizens. The excited manner of the country folk, when, stung by a ridiculous offer ; and the contemptuous expressions of the customers, when the price asked is too high, are points of observation to be enjoyed in any market. The narrow courts and streets which lead to the open space, are choked with the barrows of the Four Seasons' hawkers. The Rue St. Honoré is covered with damaged lettuces and cabbages, amongst which chiffoniers are scratching for soup materials, and from which the early riser, who has a limited capital, is gathering a modest salad. At nine o'clock there will

not be a cabbage-leaf to be seen; for already the cantonniers are preparing their brooms. At half-past seven hardly a stone is visible from the fountain in the centre of the Marché des Innocents to the Rue de Rivoli.

In this scene of confusion the hawker of the Four Seasons plays a conspicuous part; and contrives generally, to return over the Pont Neuf to the cheap quarters, with a good bargain piled upon his barrow.

CHAPTER XV.

THE BOIS DE BOULOGNE.

A VERY vivacious French writer has declared that the aspects of Paris are as variable as those of a pretty woman ; that to live in Paris is to travel always ; that early spring is best known by the arrival of the swallows in the Place Vendôme, or at the Institute. I have heard of other and less agreeable signs of approaching summer, in the French capital.

One morning, last spring, an indignant Englishman rang his bedroom bell, and demanded an immediate interview with the landlord. This individual presently appeared,—whereupon the guest commenced to describe how, throughout a long and restless night, he had been worried by the presence of a little stranger, who was by no means welcome, and for the destruction of whom various Paris caterers offer the most tempting advantages. The Englishman wound up his indignant remonstrance by stating that he had discovered a most active specimen of this most repulsive of all insects, upon his pillow. The reply was simply an expression of wonder—"Tut ! Deja !" and the landlord, wondering at the advanced state of the spring weather, left his guest in a condition of the most ungovernable rage.

There are, however, many agreeable ways in which the spring comes over Paris. Delightful are the days, when the man who has been leaning all the winter over a wood fire ; who is tired of billiards in a cold café ; who has seen every piece worth seeing ; who has grown sick of carnival balls—when this weary town bird can take his early sniff of mild spring air amid the budding trees of the Bois de Boulogne. He rides out, and happily anticipates the cool summer evenings he will spend at the Madrid : he has, perhaps, even more delightful anticipations of sentimental hours in the shadows of the trees.

Every avenue, every opening in the wood, has its distinct legend ; its peculiar association. Here, for five centuries, the fashion and the folly of Paris have played their wildest antics, and their most melancholy tragedies. There are many men who now wander about these straight alleys, and regret that the ancient forest of Rouvray should have been clipped to the present dimensions of the Bois de Boulogne ; who sigh for the deer and the hooped ladies who are gone ; who would even be glad to hear once more the click of the duellist's trigger ! How pleased would they be even to recall the time when Louis the Fifteenth and his courtiers strolled out here after their lively dinner at La Muette, and wandered with their mistresses into the dark byways of the forest ! How pleased would that party be which doggedly turns its face from the future to the past, to hear, as night closed in, the prayers and bells of the nunnery of Longchamps once more float away upon the evening air !—Longchamps, which the daughter of Louis

Cœur de Lion built in 1260, and where she is said to have performed miracles, which long afterwards drew hither pious pilgrims.

It must have been a ghastly sight when, in 1521, the body of the poor woman was raked from its grave, and exhibited to the multitude, for their veneration. Kings of France destroyed the holy associations of the spot. The liaisons of various monarchs with the nuns of the convent, are matters of notorious history. The amour of Henri Quatre with the nun Catherine de Verdun, is a conspicuous instance of the debasing influence of royalty upon the sacred character of the establishment. This lady was rewarded for her love by the convent of Saint Louis de Vernon, and her brother became President of the Parliament of Paris. Such disorders soon ruined the convent—all pious people forsook it. It was only when, some time afterwards, fine religious music was chaunted here, with the aid of theatrical talent, that the court and fashion of the capital made it once more their resort. But more scandalous scenes even than those which first depopulated the nunnery, succeeded ; till the Archbishop of Paris was compelled to close it ; still it remained the resort of fashion. About the building erected by the pious daughter of the Eighth Louis, all that was extravagant in French fashion, and all that was most costly, were assembled. Of Longchamps in 1785, a French author has given a description, which I am tempted to translate.

“ In 1785, an Englishman appeared at Longchamps in a silver carriage, the wheels of which glistened with precious stones. The horses which drew this costly

vehicle were shod with silver shoes. The scramble of every visitor was to outshine his neighbour. It was a tournament among fortunes. The courtesan vied with the duchess, the financier with the prince, and all in confusion, without distinction of place or rank. It was a real Saturnalia—a prelude to that, alas! that was soon to drench the state in blood. Masks walked about; *La Mode*, from the summit of a car drawn by butterflies, dictated her decrees; and the crowd were eager to receive and transmit them from province to province, till they became known in the most distant parts of the empire. On each side of the *Champs Elysées* might be seen rows of ladies sitting upon chairs, rivalling one another in the splendour of their dresses. In the side alleys were the pedestrians, and in the space between were the coco-merchants, musicians, Italian singers with guitars and dulcimers; hawkers crying lists of the pretty women of Paris: it was a scene of joy, and gaiety, and noise, difficult to describe. These women were some of the features of the *fête de Longchamps*.” The picture, to fit the *Longchamps* of the present time, needs little alteration. The dresses differ, but there is the same rivalry; customs differ, but there is the same malice, the same envy, I fear, as much immorality amid the throng. The revolution, however, for a time clouded these fêtes: the sacred edifice was sold and demolished; and it was only when the genius of Napoleon led the people back to the splendours of a court, that the fête was revived.

In the *Bois de Boulogne* there are, however, a thousand interesting associations, which attach it to

many popular passages of the history of France. To wander about the quiet walks of the wood, and gather, as we stroll, stray bits from its past, may not be unpleasant idleness.

Even while we take the *café noir* at the Madrid, we may run through the long story of the King's Palace, which was at one time the ornament of the wood. The Chateau of Madrid, known also as the Porcelain Chateau, or *Château de Faïence*, was built by Francis the First. It was called the Madrid in remembrance of the long imprisonment which the illustrious prisoner of Pavia suffered in Spain. The Madrid was chiefly remarkable for the rich enamels by Bernard de Palissy, which ornamented three of its façades. The Madrid was the favourite resort of its builder. Here he frequently invited ladies; and the fêtes which enlivened the castle were remarkable. Under Henri II. the festivals lost all their brilliancy; the chateau became the home "of love and mystery." Here this tender gentleman passed long hours with the beautiful Diane de Poitiers, Duchess of Valentinois. Afterwards Charles IX. here enjoyed the society of his mistress, and wrote his book entitled "*La Chasse Royale*." Then the ferocious tastes of the third Henry were here gratified by the spectacle of wild-beast fights. These barbarous scenes were stopped by the king, after a dream, in which he thought the wild beasts had broken loose, and were ready to devour him. Afterwards Madrid was little better than a dog-kennel. Henri IV., however, repaired all the ravages his predecessor had committed; and it was here that he met

the nun Catherine de Verdun, already mentioned. But these interviews suddenly ceased; and shortly afterwards Marguerite de Valois received the chateau as a reward for her consent to a divorce. While Marguerite owned it, Madrid, according to Mézeray, was a place of rest and luxury. Devout and luxurious at the same time, she here entertained the great ecclesiastical dignitaries, and hence she went often in company with Saint Vincent de Paul to the nunnery of Longchamps. Afterwards Louis the Thirteenth stayed a few times at the castle; and here Louis the Fifteenth also came. And thus the story of the chateau runs to the year 1787, when it was ordered to be carted away. It was handed over to a company for demolition; but it was so strongly built that the contractors were almost ruined by the expense of destroying it. Most of Palissy's enamels were pounded for cement: a few only were saved, and these served as models for the decoration of the great entrance to the present Madrid, where fashionable Paris drinks coffee in the cool hours of the summer evenings.

Strolling hither and thither between the Madrid and Longchamps, the idler may easily discover the chateau known as the Folie-d'Artois—better known as Bagatelle. This is ground also, not without its interesting historic associations. Originally there stood here a modest dwelling inhabited by Mdlle. de Charolois, daughter of Louis, Prince of Condé. Of this lady's festivities here, little need be said; they have been subject to many malicious interpretations, the unravelment of which would serve no useful purpose,

since the lady has been nearly a century in her grave. But the present building is noticeable as that which the Comte d'Artois, brother of Louis the Sixteenth, built, after the designs of Gallaud. It was originally estimated that the new Petit-Trianon would cost one hundred thousand francs ; whereas the affair was not complete with an expenditure of less than six times the original estimate. It is said that the Count had a bet with Marie Antoinette, that the building would be finished within a month ; it was, in effect, rapidly constructed, but not so fast as the Count declared. The large sum of money it cost earned for it a name which it has not retained generally, viz., La Folie d'Artois !

Still strolling on his idle way, the loungee, by directing his steps to the eastern quarter of the wood, may find the remains of a chateau in which many notable scenes of French history were enacted. La Muette was originally, only a hunting-lodge, where Charles the Ninth repaired to hunt the stag. Afterwards Marguerite de Valois offered the chateau to the dauphin ; and later, the property lapsed from the hands of royalty, to return to the governing house only in the minority of Louis the Fifteenth. It owed many important improvements to the Regent, before it became the favourite residence of the Duchess de Berri. Here, after dinner, came this princess, with her numerous court, to return to the Luxembourg only when the night was far advanced. The memoirs of the time leave but little doubt upon the character of the amusements enjoyed by the Regent's child. Her career

herein was marked by a series of noisy festivals. She passed away from the world while her gaities were at their height; and the Muette fell within the power of Louis the Fifteenth. This monarch rebuilt it, and enlarged the gardens about it, which he ornamented with choice flowers and magnificent orange-trees. The rooms were decorated with fine paintings and statuary. Here the King came frequently, with the Duke de Richelieu, a few favourites, and mistresses. As Baron de Gonesse he enjoyed, in this chateau, the familiarity and the licence which he loved. But we may rapidly pass this point of the history to arrive at the hours which the Dauphin and his beautiful wife, Marie-Antoinette, spent here.

Here the young couple passed the first days of their union—a union which was the charm and the death of the husband. It was to this chateau the young couple repaired on that sorrowful night when the extinguished candle in Louis the Fifteenth's chamber window, summoned the young heir's carriage to the gateway of Versailles. It was from this chateau that the young sovereign dictated that celebrated edict, known as the edict of La Muette! This wise and liberal measure propitiously opened a reign destined to be closed in blood. Stormy times soon withdrew the young couple from their retirement, to Versailles. Afterwards they visited it once yearly, when the King reviewed the French Guard. And thus ends the story of La Muette so far as royalty is associated with it. It is, however, connected with the revolution; for it was in the gardens of the chateau that the city of Paris gave the memorable banquet of

the Federation, in 1790. Twenty thousand men partook of this great entertainment. Like the Madrid, La Muette was sold, and destroyed during the revolution.

Not only is the wood crammed with historical associations—chiefly, it must be confessed of a scandalous character—but the villages also, by which its outskirts are dotted, have each their relation to some celebrated man or circumstance. There is Passy—pleasant, lively Passy—which the visitor may now reach by railway for the moderate outlay of five sous; with the names of M. de la Poplinière, M. de Boulainvilliers, the Princess de Lamballe, Jean Jacques Rousseau, and others, upon it:—there is Auteuil—celebrated also for its wine—where Boileau, Molière, and Madame Helvétius lived:—and there is Boulogne, the beloved home of Parisian laundresses, which gives its name to the wood.

Passy, although dating so far back as the reign of Charles the Fifth, appears to owe all its importance to Louis the Fifteenth, and his visits to La Muette. These frequent excursions led many of his courtiers to construct large mansions hereabouts—mansions which are the conspicuous ornaments of the present borough. Among the notable buildings, however, perhaps the Château Valentinois is the most remarkable. The eccentricities and the gallantries of the famous countess of this name, who inhabited it; and the visit of Dr. Franklin, in 1777, to it, have contributed to make it an object of interest. But on all sides we find historic ground. There is the mansion of Sillery-Genlis, where Madame de Genlis used to be, with the young Orleans family,

and where in 1789, under the banner of freemasonry, Valence, Dumouriez, d'Aiguillon, Le Pelletier, the Abbé Siéyes, and Robespierre digested their revolutionary plans. In this neighbourhood also, is *La Folie*, of which it need be said only that it was inhabited by Mdle. de Romans, and visited at the same period, by Louis the Fifteenth. When the decline of fashionable gallantries threatened to throw Passy into obscurity, the discovery of medicinal waters gave new sunshine to its prospect. It became a popular pilgrimage, to seek the fresh air and healing springs of this most charming suburb. Among its bathers Passy boasts the name of Rousseau. At the present time, however, the waters have lost their reputation. "They are too near Paris," declares the historian of the Bois de Boulogne, "to be believed in." Of late years Passy has been the residence of Beranger; and although the author of "*Les Cinq Étages*" has left this well-known suburb, many living literary men still pass their quiet hours here, and find again in its fresh air, that intellectual force which town-life—especially town literary life—tends to destroy.

Auteuil, like Passy, owes its interest to the celebrated men who have lived there. It has been said that to write the history of Auteuil is almost to write the literary history of the seventeenth century. Here Boileau had a country-house; here Molière also had his. Molière's house bears the following inscription: "*Ici fut la maison de Molière.*" In Boileau's house such men as Racine, Molière, Lafontaine, and Chappelle assembled; and here the proprietor indulged that love of skittles for which he was remarkable. At

Auteuil also, Madame Helvétius received Champfort, Turgot, Franklin, the Abbé Morellet, La Roche, Thomas, Cabanis and Boufflers; and lastly, the great Napoleon! Here also the Princess de Carignan was burned to death in the Hôtel de Praslin—Praslin!—a name upon which a more recent tragedy has thrown new gloom.

At the opposite extremity of the wood is the village to which it owes its name. The village of Boulogne traces its origin back to the fourteenth century, when some Parisians, to expiate their sins, performed a pious pilgrimage to Boulogne-sur-Mer, where there was then a celebrated image of the Virgin. On their return, they resolved to build a church precisely similar to that at the seaport; and for this object they obtained an authority from Philip V. Hence the village, which is now remarkable for the quiet manners of its inhabitants, and for the enormous quantities of linen weekly washed there. It is said, moreover, that Boulogne is remarkable for its fidelity to the sanctity of its origin; that the modern villagers are noticeable as conscientious pietists. The only historical point to be added to the history of the village is one told in the chronicles of the reign of Charles VII. It is related that in the year 1429, the Brother Richard was attracting Parisian crowds to the village by the fame of his sermons. On one particular day he preached so eloquently against luxury and gambling, that his Parisian hearers, on their return to Paris, lit huge fires in the streets, in which the men burned tables, cards, billiards, balls, etc.; and the women their ornaments. He

would be a wonderful man in these days who should so affect his congregation as to make Pride decline the attendance of the powdered footman, or the advantage of a new bonnet. And we are apt, in this present time, to forget the divineness of a demonstration like that provoked by the good brother Richard. "What terrible fanaticism!" exclaims the Independent. But if the Independent would just for a few moments subject his free thoughts to the consideration of the impulses which impelled men and women to the sacrifice of their valuables, we shall see in the rude expression of their convictions, a sincerity and a courage, which are not easily perceptible in any of the thousand and one sects who dispute the spiritual dominion of the world.

Nor in the story of Le Calvaire du Mont Valérien shall we see so much to shock even the most Protestant nerves. Le Calvaire, which from the summit of the Mont Valérien, by Suresnes, commanded a view of Paris, was a spot to which the pious inhabitants of the French capital made pilgrimages up to 1830. Now, the three crosses which crowned the hill, the remains of the monastery, the little byway chapels dotted along the road, have disappeared; all that could recal the pious work of Hubert Charpentier has been removed. Yet when, from the thirteenth Louis, this grand vicar of the archbishopric of Auch obtained permission to assemble a religious body upon the summit of this hill, that they might overlook the capital, and teach holy lessons to all pilgrims, he did brave work according to his belief; and let us hope and trust, without a sneer,

that his lessons and his absolutions did their good in his day.

Here, too, Bernardin de Saint-Pierre and Jean Jacques Rousseau once strolled in company, and prayed in the church, having resolved to ask permission to dine with the monks. And according to Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, Rousseau was so impressed with the solemnity of the place, that he exclaimed: "Now I understand the sacred passage which declares that when two or three are gathered together in the name of God, He will be in the midst of them."

This incident in the history of the place, contrasts strongly with that which Dulaure, in his "History of the Suburbs of Paris," is glad to put forward, to the disparagement of the monks. Dulaure declares that "the charlatanism which makes its way everywhere, established itself even upon the hill du Calvaire. To awaken the generosity of pious souls, and to induce them to throw devoutly plenty of money in the chapels where the mysteries of the Passion are represented, a number of coins were nailed to the ground; but the damp, which did not affect the iron nails in the same way as the copper sous, exposed the sacred artifice." This explanation of the practice which the monks undoubtedly followed, of nailing coins to the earth, is otherwise explained by Edouard Gourdon, in his recent work on the Bois de Boulogne. The explanation which he offers is that the poor people and children of the neighbouring villages (Suresnes and Puteaux), dazzled by the sight of heaps of money laying upon the ground, and separated from them only

by a grating, contrived by dexterous angling to steal so much, that the monks were at last compelled to gather up the offerings every evening ; but that feeling it necessary to have a few coins about upon the ground, to indicate to the pious where they should cast their offerings—just as the farmer deposits an egg in his hen-roosts as a broad hint to his fowls—they nailed them to the earth to stultify the felonious efforts of the villagers. This version of the story is the subject of bitter taunts between the villagers of Suresnes and Puteaux, each village referring the felony to its neighbour.

We have lingered long over the associations of the past which give interest to the Bois de Boulogne and its neighbourhood ; we may now turn to the general aspects of the Bois itself, and the improvements which have been recently made in it. In pursuing this part of our task we shall not, let us hope, be expected to indulge in those raptures which have led French writers to describe the artificial rocks as reminiscences of the Pyrenees, and to sum up the merits of recent improvements by reference to the Arabian Nights. Among other strange coincidences of recent political history, is the fact that the Bois de Boulogne owed its first beauty to the care of the first Emperor. Before Napoleon assumed supreme power in France, the Bois de Boulogne was a ragged, neglected spot, the resort of the low life of Paris. Under his care the fine plantations were laid out which are its present ornament. The advent of the present Emperor to the throne of France is destined also to be the mark of an important change in this locality.

The most doleful passage in the history of the Bois, however, is that which describes it in the hands of the Allies. The army of occupation well nigh destroyed it. Foreign woodmen would not spare the fallen Napoleon's trees—a fact to be recorded with regret. But the ravages of the Allies were wisely repaired by Louis XVIII., who had the sagacity to carry out the plans of the Emperor. Where foreign hatchets had done their work, new plantations of maple, plane, sycamore, beech, and larch were laid out. Fashionable drives were everywhere frequented; and, according to M. Gourdon, "the parchment of the aristocratic faubourg associated with the bank-paper of the Chaussée d'Antin; the Rue Lafitte extended its arms to the Rue de Lille; the latter threw itself into them; and from this union sprung the society of to-day."

The plans of the first Napoleon, and the plantations of Louis XVIII., however, did not end in results so astonishing, and in changes so complete as those which have followed upon the designs of the present Emperor. With the view of ensuring the vigorous execution of the changes which had been resolved upon in the Bois, the property was given up to the municipality of Paris in the June of 1852. This concession was, of course, accompanied by stringent conditions. These conditions place the cost of guarding and keeping up the Bois at the expense of the city; compel the municipality to spend four millions of francs within four years, in improvements; make all plans of improvement subject to the approbation of the government; and forbid the authorities from *altering the character of the wood, in any way.* Every

visitor who has strolled lately about the Bois—who has watched the twelve hundred workmen at their labour—has also studied the plans of improvement to be seen in many print-seller's shop-windows. This plan, it is said, is the design of the Emperor. It includes lakes to be excavated; islands of floral beauty to be planted; and cascades to fall from giddy heights of artificial rock. The duty of giving a practical form to the Imperial plan was confided to Varé, a gentleman who, according to his panegyrist, is a poet who writes his poems with a pick-axe. He has raised a hill—the historian calls it a mountain; he has, by ingenious machinery, lifted an enormous cedar to its crown; he has built gigantic rock-work that, as I have already hinted, is said to remind very fiery imaginations of the Pyrenees. The magnificent avenue of the Empress, leads from the Arc de Triomphe, through the old Porte Dauphine, to the wood; where it narrows and curves, conducting the visitor to the river and the islands. Near the river and lakes, are shady walks for foot-passengers;—and upon the waters, gay boats for rowers. The two islands are connected by a picturesque bridge. At the southern extremity of the river are the wild rocks, ornamented with falling water; all very pretty, picturesque, and very commendable, when the visitor considers that they are artificial rocks, and that the water which sparkles upon them, has been conducted by pipes, from the water-works of Chaillot. It may interest matter-of-fact people to know that the artificial lake is four hundred and fifty metres in length, by sixty-five metres in breadth.

From the artificial hill there is an extensive view. To the north, the lake and islands are at your feet; and a little to the right stands that conspicuous ornament, the Arc de Triomphe! Nearer lie La Muette and Ranelagh. On the opposite side, and to the left, the heights of Puteaux, Suresnes, and Mont Valérien, crowned with the fort, stand out. Before you is the greater part of the wood, with long roads cut through it. The three main roads are—the Allée des Fortifications, which follows the line of the bastions, and leads from the Porte Maillot to the southern extremity of the Bois, and Auteuil; the Allée de Longchamp, which leads from the Porte Maillot to the Porte de Longchamp; and the Allée de la Reine Marguerite, which leads from Neuilly to Boulogne. There is another road, a very old one, which, although tortuous, cuts the wood into two nearly equal parts, running from north to south; it is known as the route de St. Denis.

The view to the south, from the hill, discovers the steeple of Boulogne, and beyond, the chateau of St. Cloud.

The Bois de Boulogne includes also Ranelagh—the name of which is taken from the famous London Ranelagh of old. This French Ranelagh was first opened on the 25th of July, 1774, three months after the death of Louis XV. During Louis XVI.'s time it was a very gay place. Here Marie-Antoinette came more than once to the great Thursday balls. But the Revolution reduced Ranelagh to a dancing-place for the Sunday amusement of sans-culottes and their partners, and finally compelled the landlord

to close. When the Directory was installed, the proprietor, Morisan, to whom the permission to build was originally given, through the influence of the Prince de Soubise, once more opened the doors of Ranelagh. He obtained crowds of visitors, but of grotesque visitors, as the muscadins, who were driven at last out of the rooms by a battalion of the Directory, for indulging in aristocratic luxury. From this time, Ranelagh remained closed till 1799. The instant Buonaparte had broken up the Directory, Morisan threw open the doors of his establishment once more. This epoch produced Trénitz, the dancer, who gave his name to one of the steps of the quadrille; and drew to Ranelagh, Madame Tallien, Madame Récamier, Bertrand, Barras, and others. At this point of his fortunes, the old proprietor died. And it was well for him; for soon after, the Allies turned Ranelagh into stables and a hospital. A frightful hurricane at last destroyed the establishment. But it sprang up again under the auspices of the Countess Corvetto, wife of the Minister of Finance to Louis XVIII.; then a very long quarrel with the Crown ensued, and it was not till the year 1826 that the grant was re-given to M. Herny, who now enjoys its advantages. Thus assured of permanent possession, the proprietor built splendid salons, and a theatre. The Duchesse de Berri honoured the Saturday balls with her presence; and I have every reason to believe that Ranelagh is now a very flourishing place.

The Bois has sombre associations to many Paris families; associations which must long make it a

terrible—a repulsive neighbourhood. The Bois has been the Wimbledon Common of the French capital. Here injured husbands and quarrelsome gamblers risked their lives in pursuit of that curious kind of satisfaction said to be derived from the exchange of bullets. But duelists are said to have abandoned the Bois de Boulogne for the wood of Vincennes. The visitor may, however, recall, as he passes on his way to the Madrid (where, by the way, Lamartine lately had rooms), that memorable and harmless duel which the Count d'Artois (since Charles X.) here fought with the Duke of Bourbon (the last of the Condés), in 1798. The cause—a lady of course—was an insult which the Duke offered to the Duchess de Bourbon. The King interrupted the duel at its commencement. But another duel is more romantic in its details. I refer to that memorable passage of arms between a Polish lady and a French lady, which took place in the wood, the cause being mutual jealousy in reference to a dancer named de Chassé. The French lady was wounded in the chest, and was afterwards shut up in a convent; the Polish lady fled beyond the frontier. Madame du Barri relates this adventure in her Memoirs; and adds that de Chassé was ordered by the King to appear less seductive for the future. De Chassé replied that he really could not help being the most amiable man in the kingdom; whereupon the Duke de Richelieu is said to have exclaimed, “Learn, rascal, that you come but third in this respect; the King is first, and after the King, I take precedence.”

But, in sober seriousness, there is not a retired

part of the wood where human blood has not flowed; not a plot of open ground where murderous work has not been enacted. The time was, when every night's revelling in the capital produced its two or three pairs of matutinal visitors to the wood; when the echoes of pistol-shots announced frequently to old Morisan of Ranelagh, the settlement of some petty quarrel. But these times are happily passed, and men who have not made their first notch upon their pistols at fifty, value their honour as keenly as the old gentleman who had twice killed his man.

And now, my gossip about the Bois de Boulogne brought to a close, I may wind up as I began, with assurances that, when the streets of Paris are dazzling with the July sun and heat; when the Boulevard trees look brown and shabby, and it is really too hot to sit even in the shadowy bosquets of the Café de la Madeleine; when the Champs Elysées look dreary and dusty; the more retired parts of the wood are delightful retreats, where the pedestrian really seems to breathe some pure country air, where he forgets the weariness of summer salons, and even thinks without pleasure, of his absintho. Here the dense foliage really protects him from the sun; he has glimpses of grass; the breeze comes coolly under the trees, and the air is free from the vibrations of coach-wheels. Pleasant enough it is to seek one of these retired places, and forgetting the life about one, to dream of the many passages of human passion, of human sorrow, and of human weakness that have been played out within the limit of a stone's throw! How the wild

boar has been hunted hereabouts ; and how, with a heart as savage as the old hunter's, men have since made the spot the scene of treachery to woman ! Pic-nics too, have been eaten here without number ; some future geologist may here tap with his inquisitive hammer against the fossil bones of cold fowls and turkey, and deduce learned conclusions from the formation of the joints. Here robbers have lurked and done bloody work. Underneath lie bones of murdered men and women ; overhead, the trees that were shut up in pine-cones or acorns when these bones grew cold, and were first hidden from human eyes. These are gloomy thoughts, but they will rise to the surface, if you sit long in the wood, when the afternoon shadows are stealing along the grass.

CHAPTER XVI.

PARIS UPON WHEELS.

THE population of Paris, living upon wheels, may be divided into three distinct classes. In the first place there are the cabmen who drive the vehicles which ply for hire from their public stands near the kerb stone. These are drivers of *voitures de place*. In the second place there are the drivers of the more aristocratic broughams, which wait for their fare under private gateways, and which have all the appearance, without entailing the expense, of a private carriage. These are drivers of *voitures de remise*. In the third place there are the drivers and conductors of the omnibuses.

Of this population upon wheels I propose to give some curious details which are not familiar, I believe, to English readers. I shall begin with the hackney cabmen, their vehicles, and regulations.

The hackney cabs of Paris are nineteen hundred and ninety-nine in number. Of these not more than sixteen hundred and forty-six are in constant use. They are distributed upon seventy-four stands. They are the property of seven or eight companies or administrations, whose head-quarters are the *Barrière*

du Combat, the Barrière de la Villete, and the Barrière du Maine. Each two-horse cab has a reserve of two horses: each one-horse cab gives employment to two quadrupeds. It is estimated that the hackney cab horses of Paris are six thousand strong. They are generally worn-out cavalry steeds, bought for one hundred and fifty to two hundred francs. The fares of these cabs vary from one franc two sous to one franc and a half the journey—between any two points within the Barrières. To these fares should be added the *pourboire* which the traveller is expected to give to the cabman. This *pourboire* system may be noticed as the worst feature of any system of service in Paris. A lady orders a cap to be sent home—the boy who carries it begs a *pourboire*: a pastrycook sends a tart for dinner—invariably his smart apprentice asks for a few sous; and very sulkily the shoemaker's lad turns from your apartment, when you fail to reward him with a trifling gratuity for carrying his master's goods. But the Paris cabman, particularly, may be remarked for his rapacity in the matter of *pourboires*. How sulkily he ties up his leather money bag should you decline to favour him with the expected addition to his fare. Yet his life is not a hard one. It may be monotonous, but it is tolerably lucrative. It is no easy matter, however, to reach the box of a *cabriolet milord*.

The aspirant for the honours and gains of a cabman's seat in Paris, must serve an apprenticeship. He is compelled, by the police regulations of the capital, to spend a month upon a coach box, with a cabman who knows the streets well. Having done

this, he must present himself at the Prefecture of Police, for examination. He is required to know the byways of Paris thoroughly. Should this knowledge fail him, he is not allowed the opportunity of conducting people from the Louvre to the Madeleine by the way of the Quai Voltaire.

But, having passed his examination, he has not won his seat. Before he can get even a tumble-down cabriolet milord, he must deposit one hundred francs, as guarantee, with his masters; and he must be prepared with a second hundred francs to be invested in the purchase of his livery. This livery generally consists of a black glazed hat, bound with a gay riband; a bright blue frock coat, a scarlet waistcoat, and blue trowsers. Thus equipped, he mounts the cab-box in the morning, and departs for his appointed cab-stand, there to wait the nod of the passers-by. His pay is three francs a day, and he is supposed to carry home all he gains. In addition to his salary he is allowed to pester his customers for *pourboires*; and it is estimated that these contributions usually raise his daily earnings to five francs. Whether or not he occasionally puts a fare into his own pocket, is a question which I leave with his conscience. It is certain that he is narrowly watched—that the way to stolen wealth is difficult; since each stand has its appointed chef, and under-chef, who are charged by the police with the duty of recording the departure and arrival of every cab, upon the stand; and, as empty cabs are not allowed to linger, or, as the Parisians have it, “*maraud*” about the streets, but must proceed direct

to the nearest stand, when they have discharged their fare, the difficulty is obvious, especially as marauding entails a fine of fifteen francs in each instance. The chef may be noticed, ensconced in a little box about the size of a turnpike house near every stand. From his little window he notices the arrivals and departures; and by his clock, passengers are able to see the time at which they take a cab, should they wish to hire it by the hour. These chefs and under-chefs are paid by the police—the former receiving between eight hundred and one thousand francs a year, and the latter thirty sous a day. The under-chef makes up his income by looking after the interests of the cabmen, while they are amusing themselves in the nearest wine-shop; for which duty he receives occasional pourboires.

The cabman of Paris is, as I have already hinted, severely watched by the police; and he is generally a surly fellow, upon whom slight punishment would probably have little effect. He is certainly either a Norman or a Savoyard—just as certainly as the water-carrier is an Auvergnat. For the first complaint made against him, of extortion or impertinence he is fined, and his badge is taken from him for four days. The repetition of misconduct speedily entails dismissal from the cab-box altogether. On the other hand, the police reward honest cabmen who resist temptation, and carry to the Prefecture all goods or money they may find in their vehicles. The names of these honest men are placarded publicly upon all the cab-stand boxes, for the admiration of the passers-by. This honour is likely to stimulate the men to do their

duty : to reward also, is the duty of those who are bound to punish. In 1853, thus stimulated, the cabmen of Paris carried, in bank notes and coin, no less a sum than two hundred and eighty-eight thousand and sixty francs to the Prefecture.

The foregoing are the details, which I have found interesting, of the life of the Paris cabman. I may add that he does not clean his cab or groom his horses. The first duty is performed by a man who rises at half-past two o'clock in the morning, to set to work upon the cabs which have been in use on the previous day. He is paid at the rate of five sous for every cab he cleans ; and he generally contrives to earn his four francs. The cab-horse grooms are paid two francs and a half daily.

The common cabs and cabriolets of Paris are, however, surpassed in numbers and in the elegance of their appointments, by those well-known vehicles in which sly lovers repair to the Bois de Boulogne ; in which people, wishing to make an impression, go their rounds to leave their cards ; and in which lorettes display the last fashions. So brisk is the business of love, and show, and vanity, that ample business is found within the fortifications, for five thousand six hundred and seventy-one of these carriages !

They closely resemble the doctor's brougham of suburban London. They are driven by well-dressed coachmen, who get only two francs and a half daily from their masters, because the *pourboire* for the driver of a *remise* far exceeds that expected by the common cabman. Ten sous, for instance, is an ordinary *pourboire* to a *remise* driver. The single brougham may

be had for one franc fifteen sous per hour; the cabriolets of the remise class cost one franc and a half per hour; and the calèches, which are elegant open vehicles carrying four persons, charge two francs per hour. These well-appointed hackney carriages are also let out by the hour for two francs and a half; or for the month at about five hundred francs, with a pourboire of twenty-five francs for the driver. Ten years ago there were not more than four hundred of these carriages in Paris. But within this time the social aspect of Paris has changed considerably.

Every year the number of visitors increases; every year the Bourse counts new lucky adventurers; every year some fresh impulse is given to the commerce of the capital: and thus every year more people are ready to pass from the convenience of the cab-stand to the more aristocratic vehicle which rests under a gateway. The man who can now afford to dine at Vachette's, drives thither in a remise; forgetting, if he can, the less sunny hours, when it was a treat to rumble to a Barrière once a week, in the rickety milord, for the advantage of a cheap repast. A recent French writer on the Bois de Boulogne assures his readers that French countesses, who drive past the Madrid, at the fashionable hour, in their own gay carriages, frequent the more lonely avenues of the wood in a remise during the evening, accompanied by their lovers, and with the curtains down!

It may be remarked, as a characteristic of the common Paris cabmen, and the drivers of the remise, that they *do their work* with a listlessness, which has something

saucy in it. They loll upon their boxes; plant their feet upon the board before them; let the reins hang loosely upon the horse's back; glance sulkily to the right and left; and stop the vehicle in obedience to your request, without either looking at you or moving from the comfortable position upon the box. Ask them for change, and they slowly proceed to gain the perpendicular; drag the heavy leather purse from their pocket; pause to exhibit the nicety of the art of expectoration; place your five-franc piece between their teeth; and then, in the course of two or three minutes, enlivened by sundry guttural expressions of annoyance, manage to drop the full change into your hand. Give them a *pourboire* of ten centimes only, and they will receive it and deposit it in their bag without appearing to notice your existence; but if you require a *merci* you must invest at least twenty-five centimes. The cabmen of Paris, it must be allowed, have neither the low vocabulary nor the insolent menaces of the London tribe; but they have a saucy, contemptuous manner, which is equally galling. They say very little, because they know that every oath may cost them a round twenty francs; but you can see that it is only the fear of police interference that restrains them.

I have yet to notice the third class into which the Paris population upon wheels naturally divides itself. As a rule, it may be safely stated that the omnibus conductors of Paris are a better class of men, than those who attend to the doors of the people's carriages in London. They do not indulge in every kind of low ribaldry as their vehicle progresses; they have not an impertinence for every traveller who asks a puzzling

question. They never push passengers into their vehicle, and give the driver notice to proceed, before people are seated; they never try to cram more than the proper number into the carriage. They are civil to gentlemen—extremely courteous and respectful to ladies. They never shout along the road for passengers; but wait quietly watching till they are hailed. They are all dressed alike. They wear caps ribbed, and drawn out like accordions; short jackets with gay buttons, and blue trowsers.

During the progress of the vehicle, they are usually occupied with their accounts and correspondence tickets, which they have by them—systematised, and always convenient. Indeed, the writing and book-keeping of Paris conductors, appears to be their chief employment. They are well checked, so that robbery of the employer is a difficult matter. The dial which is at the end of every Paris omnibus, indicates the number of passengers within. As each person enters, it becomes the duty of the conductor to advance the hand of the dial, one point. It is known to all the passengers that this is his duty, and should he neglect it, the fact is patent to all within; and the probability is that he will be reported at the next bureau, before which the vehicle stops. Again, the conductor is liable to a visit at any moment, from an inspector; and should this official find that the number of passengers within is not marked upon the dial, a fine of five francs is at once inflicted. The repetition of the offence quickly leads to dismissal.

Of the omnibus driver, with his chrome-yellow hat, I have nothing to remark, save that he is

paid a salary of three francs a-day; and that he is obliged to deposit a guarantee of one hundred francs with his master. The pay of the conductor is also three francs a day; and he is obliged not only to purchase his own livery at a cost of one hundred francs, but also to deposit two hundred francs, as a guarantee, with his master. Thus the conductor must be able to command three hundred francs before he can find work—a sufficiently heavy tax upon so limited a salary. There is a comfort, however, that the Paris conductor enjoys, which would be gratefully acknowledged by the London conductor—it is the projecting roof which screens him from sun and rain.

There are no less than four hundred omnibuses plying about the streets of Paris, giving work to two thousand four hundred horses. They all operate harmoniously together; and by their system of correspondence, a passenger can go from any point, to any part of the capital. Here, passengers wait in winter by a comfortable fire, until the official in attendance informs them that the omnibus proceeding to, or in correspondence with, the point they wish to reach, is at the door. Nor need they crowd to the vehicle. On entering the waiting-room, the chef inquires where you wish to go. Your reply produces a number. If you are the first applicant in the waiting-room for your omnibus, you have number one. This ticket entitles you to enter the omnibus on its arrival, before any other passenger who may come after you. Thus pushing and scrambling are unavailing; for, as the omnibus draws up, the chef places himself at the door, and receives the tickets from the holders.

in regular rotation, as they take their seats. And how commodious these seats are! Every passenger has a comfortable arm-chair, with room to stretch his legs without annoying his opposite neighbour. There is ample space also, between the tallest passenger's hat and the roof. Let me add that this commodious carriage is lighted by two powerful lanterns, which enable any person present to read comfortably. The general fare, for any distance within the Barrières, is six sous; but there are omnibuses which run from the Barrière de l'Etoile to the Place de la Bastille for three sous! To these random notes of information I may add, that the men who govern the waiting-rooms are paid eight hundred francs a year—an income which they contrive to increase by selling perfumes, and other light articles.

The Paris visitor should not leave Paris, however, without having performed a journey upon one of the colossal omnibuses, which run upon a tramway, from the Barrière de Passy, nearly to the Place de la Concorde. These gigantic carriages hold no less than sixty passengers each; yet two horses draw them, with ease. The passengers are divided into two classes, namely, those who pay three sous and enjoy seats; and those who pay two sous, and perform the journey, standing.

In the names which the proprietors have tacked to their omnibuses, the observer may trace a difference as wide between them and those of London, as there is in the vehicles themselves. Thus the United Ladies ply between La Villette and St. Sulpice; the Gazelles *between the* Barrière de la Gare and the Palais

Royal ; the Swallows between the Place Cadet and the Rue Mouffetard ; and the Parisiennes from Montparnasse to the Boulevard du Temple. The four hundred Parisian omnibuses include also the Doves, and the Parisian Gondolas.

To the foregoing notes concerning Paris upon wheels, I may add that in Paris the hackney carriages are under the vigilant eye of the police. The horses are inspected ; the cleanliness of the vehicles insured. Even the genteel remises are subject to the regulations of the municipal body. On the first Tuesday of every month, the police inspectors assemble on the Quai aux Fleurs, and the remises of Paris, having formed a line—which often extends to the Tuileries—pass slowly before them, each vehicle undergoing a vigilant inspection, inside and out, as it passes ;—the height and breadth of every seat being duly measured. Those which are found deficient in any essential, are turned back, and are not suffered to ply for hire before they have undergone proper repairs. Thus Paris upon wheels includes a thoroughly regulated body of people ; and is drawn by well-fed if not elegant horses. The result is that all people may ride in comfort and security. The pace is undoubtedly slow, but the progress is more than equally sure. Paris cab-horses amble, whereas London cab-horses sometimes gallop. But then, in Paris, pleasure seems to be the business of life ; whereas in London, business is the one object of existence.

The two nations must be regarded separately. The Englishman is always eager to arrive at his destination, and would travel in a coal-box to save

five minutes; whereas the Frenchman, provided the cushions are soft, and the cigar a tolerable one, is not particular as to the hour at which he may reach his journey's end. With the Englishman, life is a race: with the Frenchman it is a leisurely saunter. The French tradesman retires at forty, with an independence of one hundred and sixty pounds a year, and spends the remaining mornings of his life in a two sous chair, in the shade of the Tuileries gardens: the English tradesman drives a roaring business till he is sixty-five, and then retires upon his thousand a year, to grumble at the leisure he has won, and declare that he was happier amid his grocery than he is in his suburban shrubberies.

And so the Parisian Gondolas crawl quickly enough for Frenchmen; while the Fairy Queen's gallop from Peckham to the City is the theme of daily grumbling, amongst her headlong, panting passengers.

CHAPTER XVII.

STREET-NOTES.

WHILE wandering through the streets of Paris, the visitor is often arrested by the appearance of men in all kinds of uniform ;—for uniform is the Frenchman's conspicuous passion. At every turn the stranger meets a man with an extraordinary badge upon his cap, or a remarkable coat upon his back. Every Parisian administration has its livery, and every man who serves an administration, is compelled to habit himself according to its rules, and, more, to pay for the livery. Thus, as I have recorded elsewhere, it costs the cabman 100 francs for clothes, before he can mount the box of "a cabriolet milord." Conspicuous amid the great liveried population of the French capital, are the men who clean the roads and water them. These may be noticed in the summer dressed in blue linen clothes, with a glazed hat, in the front of which is a large brass plate, with the word "Cantonnier, No. —," engraved upon it. In the winter the same men, wrapped in sheep-skins, remind the traveller of the snows of Sweden. They are spread all over Paris, and are a hard-working, ill-paid race of men.

The powerful sweeping force of Paris, is divided into

six divisions. Each division is governed by three inspectors, who receive each three francs daily; and three sub-inspectors, who are severally paid thirty sous daily. The sub-inspectors are out at three o'clock, in the morning, and remain out till nine o'clock usually. If, however, they are required throughout the day—for instance, in wet weather—they receive three francs six sous for their day's labour. The men governed by these inspectors, are the cantonniers who sweep the streets. These men are paid two francs a day, out of which salary they pay for their brooms; and these brooms cost them no less than four sous daily. This slender pay entitles the administrative to the cantonnier's time from three o'clock in the morning until night-fall, an interval of rest from nine o'clock in the morning to noon being allowed. Again, the poor cantonnier is compelled to deposit twenty francs with his employers as security for the watering-pots which he uses to wet the by-streets in hot and dry weather. Only the principal thoroughfares of Paris, as the Boulevards and the Rue de Rivoli, are watered by carts; the rest are damped by the cantonniers, who may be seen wielding huge cans in the middle of the road, and dexterously sprinkling the water from them from one kerb to the opposite kerb. The divisions of sweepers and watermen average 130 cantonniers under ordinary circumstances, but there are always supplementary workmen at hand, ready to strengthen each division when bad weather makes an additional number of working brooms necessary. These supplementary *men* are called apprentices, and earn only a franc for

their morning's work from three o'clock to nine; if, however, these apprentices work through the day, they obtain twelve additional sous.

These salaries are small enough, and will not allow a man to live well; yet they represent in Paris, more comforts than their equivalent in English coin would provide in London. In estimating the pay of continental working-men, this important consideration is often forgotten. The fact that the cantonnier, with his warm sheep-skin, is a man much envied by many of his poor neighbours, proves that his position is not altogether miserable: the additional fact that, when a sudden frost sets in, the inspectors can easily double the number of their division, also proves that the metier of cantonnier is far from representing the most distressed class of the Paris working population; yet the cantonnier's duties are neither pleasant nor light.

Any stray reveller who has happened to be on his way home about three o'clock in the morning, when the weather was damp and cold, has certainly been stopped by rows of men closely muffled, and silently plying their brooms amid heaps of vegetable rubbish, and surrounded by chiffoniers with their flickering lanterns. The scene is a very sad one, when contrasted with the glowing rooms from which the passer-by has probably emerged. Yet, as I have shown in a previous chapter, the chiffoniers are better off than thousands of the London poor, who frequent the mud-banks and sewers of the metropolis, or scrape from London streets, a most precarious living. The chiffonier who works steadily, earns a sum quite equal to that which repays the cantonnier—picks from the dust-heaps.

which the latter prepares for the morning carts, a living as good as that afforded by the use of the broom.

The first duty the sweeper has to perform when he wanders into the dark streets at three o'clock in the morning, is, to collect the rubbish lying about the road, into little heaps, ready to be picked up by the rubbish cart. It is the business of each inhabitant, it should be remarked, to perform this duty; but most people prefer to pay to the municipal authorities the daily two centimes per metre of frontage, for which they are willing to undertake the duty. This payment relieves them from all responsibility; but those people who decline the payment of the two centimes, are compelled, under pain of a fine, to sweep the way before their premises, before the cart passes.

The cart is generally the property of some suburban agriculturist, known in Paris as a boueur, who pays the city authorities 200 francs annually, for the privilege of fetching a daily load of rubbish to manure his farm. This cart is attended in its progress through the streets by a male and female sweeper (for there are cantonnières hired at four sous per hour), two loaders, and the boueur, who generally drives. The cart having removed the little rubbish heaps from before the doorways of each house, it becomes the duty of the cantonnier to give a second sweep to the streets, and to clear the current of the open gutters. Having performed these duties, he retires for rest and refreshment, till noon, when, in fine weather, he begins the watering process. Foreigners are often struck with the immense amount of manual labour devoted to this operation, and are puzzled to understand why the

municipal authorities have not brought watering-carts into general use.

I made some inquiries on this head, and obtained a very satisfactory result. It appears that the municipality does advocate hand-carts; and it is generally allowed that these vehicles would save much labour; but the cantonniers object to them because the administration demand the deposit of a heavy security before they will entrust them to their employés' hands.

I obtained many of the foregoing details from a poor man who had fallen from the position of a prosperous gilder, with 50,000 francs in the caisse, to be the sweeper of the streets of Paris. He related his experiences with an air of perfect honesty. His misfortunes had made him gentle, and he related them with the appearance of a quiet philosophy that was very touching. Even his savings had been lost by the failure of the establishment in which he had deposited them. All that remained to him was some comfortable furniture. His wife, as baker's porter, earned forty francs a month and a pound loaf per day, and for this remuneration, was employed from three o'clock in the morning until two or three o'clock in the afternoon. The man had married when only nineteen years old, and while yet young, had bought his uncle's business for 250 francs. At this period of his life he earned seven francs every day. He was prudent, so that in five years he managed to put aside no less than 15,000 francs. A period had occurred at which he could count 50,000 francs at his bank. The Revolution, and the introduction of a new system of gilding combined, effected his ruin. Still he worked

on at his trade, through evil fortune, till 1845, when wearied at the failure of repeated promises made by the friends of his brilliant time, he accepted the employment of cantonnier. When I saw him he was still hoping to get something out of the bankrupt establishment in which he had deposited his savings. He was not discontented with his lot; he hoped, probably, to become some day a chef de division, and in this position, to enjoy a good salary on easy terms.

I may here remark that the work which the cantonniers have declined, viz., the hand-cart watering, is now performed by contractors. The contracts are awarded at an auction, by the candle. The town provides the carts, and the contractors supply a man and a horse to each vehicle. The usual price at which the man and horse are provided is about 170 francs monthly. Municipal inspectors are placed at each pump, by the town, charged with the duty of compelling the contractors to do their duties. These inspectors receive no more than two francs seventeen sous daily.

In close relation with the cantonnier sweepers, and hardly distinguishable from them by the casual visitors, are the paveurs-cantonniers, who are employed by the administration of the Ponts et Chaussées to mend the streets. The duty of these men is simply to mend—all new paving being done by contract. The paveurs-cantonniers are divided into forty-two brigades, each brigade averaging six men and five apprentices. These paviours earn three francs daily, the chefs de brigade four francs, and the adult apprentices, about two francs and a half. They work

from six in the morning till six at night, having an hour at nine o'clock and an hour at two o'clock for refreshment. The summer visitor may notice these poor fellows lying about the streets between two and three o'clock, some eating their dinner of bread and plums, others smoking their caporal. In 1848, these men struck for eight francs a day. The paviments of Paris, indeed, appear to be an independent class of workmen, and generally to value their labour at a high figure. Their class presents one of the most prosperous working-men's associations in Paris.

I have already stated that the *cantonnier-paveurs* work is confined to road-mending, and that all new paving is performed by contract. The contracts for the city of Paris are six in number. Of these, two contracts are awarded to the body of associated paviments—and the remaining four to individual contractors. The success of the associated paviments is evident in the fact that, whereas the workmen to the individual contractors earn only four francs and a half daily, the associated men average gains of five francs daily, each. The association includes fifty men, who all share the profits they help to earn. The men employed upon the six contracts are said to muster about 250 strong, with an equal number of labourers, or *garçons*. All these men live in their own furnished rooms, except the unmarried apprentices, who enjoy sleeping-rooms in some *maison garni*, for the moderate sum of six francs per month.

I am informed that the cost to the town, of each flat slab of pavement, is estimated at eighty-five centimes, or eightpence-halfpenny.

There is another class of street-workers which every Paris visitor has noticed. The egoutier's costume, when he is prepared for his repulsive labours, is sufficiently remarkable. He is cased in leather to the hips, and is otherwise equipped for a descent into the public sewers. To explore Paris under-ground—to know its tubular streets, and keep them in order, are his terrible duties. Still, I am informed, the egoutier's position can be obtained only by the force of powerful patronage. Either a deputy or a senator is a requisite friend, before a man can hope to grope his way about the sewers of Paris. Yet their pay is only three francs daily, while their work-hours are from six in the morning till five in the afternoon. There are only 120 of them for Paris and the Banlieue.

They drink freely ; but this habit may be referred to the nature of their employment. Yet some are prudent men. One, whom I questioned, was a member of a benefit society, which, for a payment of fifteen sous monthly, insured him medical attendance and medicine, during illness. These egoutiers may be often remarked standing in the road, near an uncovered drain, from which a high ladder protrudes. They are, however, not so remarkable a race of men as that of the water-carriers, who jostle you at every turn in the by-streets—whom you meet upon every staircase ; who may be remarked lying about the pedestal of Molière's statue in the Rue Richelieu, or reposing in the doorways of the first wood merchant's.

They are all Auvergnats. Their personal appearance *is worth* the foreigner's notice. The face is heavy—

almost brutal; the figure, thick-set and awkward; the clothes coarse and dirty; and the head is covered with a dark slouched hat, which may well remind an Englishman, of a theatrical bandit at Greenwich fair. These men constitute a population apart. They are as exclusive a race as are the Quakers at Hackney. They speak a language incomprehensible to the Parisian; they have *barrière* balls where only Auvergnats are admitted—they hold to their own province, and regard Paris only as some foreign place upon which they may prey, to return to their native village, with a heavy purse. To accomplish this object, the water-carrier, like the rabbit-skin dealer, or the old clothes merchant, denies himself the moral comfort of a clear conscience, and gives himself up to the tricks which enable him to deal short weight. Directly he has saved a little money, he turns usurer—lending out his savings to his companions, at very heavy interest.

His usual mode of setting to work when he first arrives in Paris, is to take an engagement with the proprietor of a *chantier*, or wood and coke warehouse—for all such proprietors have begun as Auvergnat water-carriers. In this capacity of servant, he earns wages ranging from fifteen to twenty francs a month, board and lodging included. In addition to these advantages he has *pour-boires* wherever he carries wood or water; so that he is enabled to save, from the hour of his arrival in the capital. By degrees he becomes known at the houses to which he conveys wood and water; his savings grow at the *caisse*—an opportunity offers, and he buys a little black hole full of logs of wood and sacks of coke, and herein he gladly ensconces

himself. His children roll about its black floors; his wife folds her arms, and leaning against the doorway exhibits a very dingy face to her neighbours. The Auvergnat is now happy; for he is on his way to fortune. He lifts his buckets slung at each end of his shoulder-bar, and goes briskly on his way. He cheerfully carries these two heavy vessels of water to the fourth story of any house, for the small sum of two sous; or arranges to supply the two buckets daily, to subscribers who will pay him thirty sous per month regularly. He is compelled to obtain the permission of the police before he can pursue this course of industry; and only at certain public fountains is he allowed to fill his buckets.

He is the sworn enemy of all city improvements, since these strike at the heart of his business. He hates any mention of water companies, and detests the police—for the water companies have a detestable habit of laying down pipes, and the police are nice as to weights and measures. He is easily roused to anger, and is known to fight with his countrymen, using his shoulder-bar for a weapon. He loves a dance at his barrière ball to the notes of his native pipes. Directly he has a little money to spare he puts it out at heavy interest, and so, by degrees, he works his way back to his native village, there to live comfortably for the remainder of his life. He leaves few friends behind him.

It may be remembered by a few readers that not long before Charles the Tenth drove out of Paris to make way for Louis Philippe, he summoned the water-carriers of Paris, to St. Cloud, and there regaled them with a ban-

quet consisting of roast meat and salad. It is said that he appreciated the Auvergnat character in appealing to the stomach rather than to the head. The effect was seen in the revolution. The population of Paris was roused—excepting always that part of it devoted to the carriage of water. The Auvergnats would not disturb their digestive organs by any kind of excitement. While the revolutionary storm passed over the capital not an Auvergnat was seen mingling in the excitement—Charles the Tenth had measured his men correctly! And now this banquet furnishes a retort to every Parisian who quarrels with a water-carrier. “Vas t’en diner avec Charles Dix!” is thrown in the teeth of the “hewers of wood” and “drawers of water.” But the retort does not particularly disturb the Auvergnat’s stolid nature. He goes on his way with his buckets, or bears along the narrow byways his botte of wood, conscious of his position, realising to himself the happy time when he will be able to return to his native place, and laugh at the world he leaves behind him.

But he has been uneasy of late. Chantiers no longer fetch a heavy price as of old, for water companies are at work in different quarters of Paris, and all new houses have water-pipes laid down. New improvements are death to the Auvergnat. There is, for instance, the Administration, whose works are situated on the Quai des Celestines. This company supplies filtered water to the inhabitants of Paris. Already it has sixty water-carts, and employs no less than 150 men. These men receive two francs each daily, if they dispose of only two cart-loads

of water; if, however, they contrive to sell three loads, their pay is increased to three francs. This admirable arrangement makes the men active—for it gives them an interest in the extension of their master's business. To imitate this, many of the Auvergnats have constructed immense zinc filters in their chantiers, but it is hardly probable that they will be long able to contend against the municipal authorities, who are laying down pipes, and powerful companies, who will be in a position to undersell them. Already the people of Paris profit by the great pump of Chaillot (which feeds the water-works of the Place de la Concorde); that of the Gros Caillon, which supplies the Quartier St. Germain; and the Artesian well, that does duty about the Panthéon. All these works are destined, and at no very distant day, to cut to the heart of the Paris water-carrier's business. But the Auvergnat is a prudent, hard-working man, and will certainly find other employment. He is ignorant and he is combative, and he believes that his native province is worth all the rest of France; but these are defects which time may rub away, leaving us in the future generations, good and intelligent workmen;—a race not to be despised in these times, when the great struggle of life is to gain bread not by downright work, but by dexterous bargains in the produce of our neighbour's handiwork.

And now the reader will permit me to introduce him to a gay race of men who frequent the sunny quays of the Seine, jingle their bells at the *barrière* fêtes, and are conspicuous at the Bois de Boulogne. The coco-merchants of Paris are conspicuous amid

the working people. The extravagance of their costume and the splendour of the fountains which they carry, point the attention of every stranger to them. I believe they alone, in Paris, enjoy the privilege of plying their trade without medal or badge. Thus any working man suffering the consequences of a dull season, easily takes to the business of coco-merchant. He dons a gay cocked hat; buys or hires a fountain, and thus prepared, trots off to the nearest fête. But these accidental coco-merchants must be carefully distinguished from the permanent followers of the business, who enjoy a monopoly, and live and make savings out of it. Thus the two merchants who have the right to sell coco in the Palais Royal, are conspicuous Paris characters—not to be confounded with the vagrant dabblers in their business. These men have fountains elaborately decorated; plated goblets, &c., and walk about to the tune of little bells hung here and there about them. One fountain is surmounted with a little clock—possibly for the convenience of the nurses who frequent the Palais Royal, and sit knitting under the trees, while their children skip or play with those huge wash-leather balls, so dear to the youth of the capital. The cost of these coco-fountains ranges from fifty to two hundred and fifty francs—according to the beauty of the manufacture. The liquor which the Paris apprentices love so fondly, is made in the following manner.

The coco-merchant having secured the gayest fountain his slender capital will command, purchases five sous worth of stick liquorice, and one or two lemons. The liquorice is carefully cut up, and

deposited in the fountain. A bucket of water is then poured upon the flavouring material, some lemon is added, and the coco is ready to be drawn off through the tap which protrudes under the merchant's right arm, when the fountain is at his back. I discovered the fact that an ordinary fountain full of this coco, turns five francs into its owner's pocket before it is emptied; and that one five sous deposit of stick liquorice sufficed to flavour two fountains full of water. Thus, for about eight sous expenditure, the coco-merchant realises ten francs. This profit appears very considerable, before we have taken into consideration the important fact, that it is only on hot fête-days the coco-merchant can hope to get rid of a fountain full of his liquor. When wet days dawn upon him, and he is compelled to trudge about from one workshop to another, offering coco to the apprentices at one liard (half a farthing) the goblet, his position is not an enviable one. And this drawback has so far outweighed the advantage of heavy profits, that within the last ten years the ranks of the Paris coco-merchants have fallen, from one thousand strong, to about two hundred. Frequent bad summers and rainy weather have operated to effect this decrease. On fête-days a coco-merchant has been known to realise eight and ten francs; but then wet days have followed, and he has returned home after a long day's work, with less than two francs in his pocket. These wet days have at last worn away his spirit, and he has put aside his gay fountain, with its tricolor flags, or let it out to a more adventurous associate, at the daily rent of six sous. Many Paris workmen who pursue other employment



throughout the week, occupy their Sunday by selling coco; and thus on this day, the coco-merchants appear in all public places, in great force.

It would seem that the days of the coco-merchants are numbered—that the glory of ten years ago is departed, according to their own account; but then, according to any man, his special business is not so prosperous as it used to be.

Everything, according to a considerable proportion of every nation, is declining. The song of the good old times, is a national song in every quarter of the globe. The downfall of England has been long ago demonstrated as a certainty by Ledru Rollin and others, as that of France has been foretold by every faction out of power. Every nation is tottering, according to any individual in it, who happens to have a clouded prospect. When the Paris apprentices shall cease to drink coco, France, according to the probable dictum of the coco-merchants, will sink to a second-rate power. England, according to Tomkins, cannot be going ahead while Tomkins is going astern; on the other hand, England must be progressing rapidly, according to Brown, for this year Brown's receipts exceed his expenses by a considerable sum. This habit of looking at a nation through the gloom or the glory of individual failure or success is very prevalent in Paris. On the one hand, the inquirer is informed that the present state of things cannot possibly last longer than three months; on the other, an assurance is given that everything is most prosperous—and prosperous, too, upon a very

Let the visitor stroll, for instance, into the Champs Elysées, and question the people there, as to the actual state of Paris. He will receive the most gloomy accounts. Pictures of appalling distress will probably be laid before him, intended to freeze his blood. Let him then inquire into the Champs Elysées' business, and the secret of this gloom will be revealed to him. The business of Fantoccini, of the wooden horses, of the little games of chance for gingerbread, is in a very bad state. All this is attributed to the growing popularity of the Bois de Boulogne, and the general decay of Paris. On inquiry I found that the people who have stands or stalls in the Champs Elysées are not, at any rate, weighed down by rent. For instance, the owners of the gingerbread and macaroni stalls pay fifty-eight sous per month, for their standing room; while the directors of the little Marrisonette Theatre are at a monthly expense of five francs for rent—a sum which they must take almost daily. The Fantoccini play vaudevilles with dolls, to the delight of the Parisian children and their bonnes, who enjoy the entire performance for the moderate sum of two sous; including the persevering solos of a violin hired by the spirited lessee, it is reported, at the daily cost of two francs. But the owners of the wooden horses are the most dignified caterers of the Champs Elysées, for they carry on their business upon their own purchased ground. Even the proprietors of the brilliant little cafés, which look at night, through the dense foliage of the trees, like so many scenes from the "Arabian Nights," cannot look down with disdain upon the

wooden horses, upon which the gay Parisians enjoy a penny ride.

The café concerts of the Champs Elysées are remarkable. They hit the Parisian notion of pleasure, exactly. The enjoyment of the fresh air—of the after-dinner coffee and its accompanying brandy or kirsch—of lively songs and gay music, and of an open concert-room glittering with gold and glass, and occupied by ladies dressed in satin and lace, is here concentrated. Visitors may enter the enclosure and take their seat before the brilliant little concert-box on the stipulation that they order something. Of all these cafés that on the left hand, as the visitor walks towards the Rond Point, is the most distinguished. Here the ladies disdain to go the round of the tables, with the customary velvet bag, asking for eleemosynary sous. Here all the artists are paid by the proprietor of the café. The orchestra is composed of twelve musicians, each of whom receives a monthly stipend of 150 francs. The ladies have no less than 300 francs monthly. Then there are four female vocalists of minor importance who receive 150 francs per month, and there is one gentleman whose voice is estimated at the monthly value of 200 francs. All this talent is free to the passer-by, provided the said passer-by is prepared to expend a certain sum in refreshments; and the price at which these refreshments are served is sufficiently high to meet any extra expense incurred by the landlord.

For instance, the most economical frequenter, who chooses the least expensive order, viz. a little glass of brandy, must pay eleven sous. Here a choppe is

valued at sixty centimes. But across the main road, where the ladies adopt the expedient of the velvet bag to secure their remuneration, the "consommation" is cheaper. The petit verre is twenty-five centimes, or twopence halfpenny, and the choppe forty centimes, or fourpence; while a bottle of beer costs only fivepence. But then the frequency with which the ladies descend from the little brilliant concert-box, and, with the blandest smile, place the velvet bag upon the table before you, so strongly appeals to your gallantry, that I am not certain the aristocratic arrangement on the opposite side, is not the less expensive plan for the visitor.

There are other conspicuous traders in the streets of Paris. There are, for instance, the hawkers, who suddenly throw a rag down upon the pavement, and deposit upon it a heap of razors, or stockings, or port-monnaies. These men have a companion at the corner of the street, watching the approach of the police. At a given sign, they snatch up their wares and run away. Then again there are the people who follow all kinds of sales, and range their articles against a wall, that they may sell them as bargains from the sale at hand. All these people frequent the markets and ply their trade industriously, with the permission of the police, till 8 o'clock in the morning. Such "marchands ambulants" are well watched by the police. Some of them are extremely clever in their addresses to their customers, and contrive to sell their rubbish at a wonderful rate. They may be often found *upon the Pont des Arts*, plying their trade at 11 o'clock at night, by the light of a penny candle.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE ENGLISH PAINTED BY THE FRENCH.

I INTEND to paint the English as they appear to a foreigner accustomed to foreign manners, to foreign usages, to foreign tastes, animated by foreign instincts. I do not deny the English their political greatness, their industrial power, their financial strength, and the rare nationality of their spirit; but I hold that the English are barren of all which makes up the intellectual life, the art, and the elegance, of our continent. Their country consists of iron and coal. They understand only these two materials; beyond, they are blind copyists: they have neither eyes to see nor ears to ear; they pay musicians and painters high prices, only for the vain pleasure of appearing to understand their works. But then they inhabit a detestable country, in which neither the mind nor the body are at ease; in proof of which let me point to the fact, that there is not a Frenchman not a Belgian, not a German, not a Prussian, not an Oriental, not a foreigner, in short, established in England, for pleasure; while, on the contrary, the continent is gorged with Englishmen, who, having made their fortune, have hastened away from their native

land to taste the sweets of existence, abroad. Let people who disagree with my censures, answer this point. But then think of their climate! Although our near neighbours, two hours suffice to carry you from the steady temperature of France, to a temperature which varies frightfully every few hours; which change, let it be observed, justifies the apparent incongruities of dress that are so amusing in English ladies,—the boa worn with the muslin dress, for instance. Think of the pale ball known to Englishmen as a June sun! It is, indeed, by an effort of pure gratitude towards the people that I mention the sun at all; for, really, English sunlight is a medium between continental moonlight and darkness. But then we must excuse this poor luminary, so little known by our neighbours; it must traverse the thick English fogs before it can attempt to warm these poor islanders, who almost live upon meat, and drink inconceivable quantities of beer. Strange that in two hours we should leave the fine climate of France for the permanent fogs of England! Indeed, the English are so surprised when the sun does penetrate the fog, that they exclaim at meeting, “It is a fine day, sir.” So little, however, do they expect the sun, that they have no blinds to their windows.

Arrived at Folkstone, the Frenchman at once notices the marked differences which exist between his own character, and that of the English. The French rush upon deck and press towards the shore; push forward again at the custom-house; but they arrive no sooner at the train than the Englishmen and Germans, who have quietly landed with all the

majesty of Turks. Well, I deduct something from this bit of observation, viz.: that the calmness and deliberation with which the Englishman sets about everything, contribute to the strength and greatness of his country, permitting him to build solidly and for the future ; where, with our feverish impetuosity, our impatient frivolity, we build upon sand. Facts will support this proposition.

A Frenchman, the instant he touches English soil, is suddenly a changed man ; all his habits must be set aside ; he must be satisfied with the pale English sun of June ; he must be content to be frozen, and baked, and wetted within a few hours ; he will also be depressed by the sombre aspect which the coal smoke gives to the towns. Again, he approaches England by its taverns and lodging-houses. Here all is in direct opposition to the comfortable habits which the Frenchman brings from home. The furniture is hard and angular : one would think that this England, so essentially maritime, gave to her passing visitors, sea-biscuits to sleep upon ! Speaking for myself, I will own, even at the risk of passing for a Sybarite and an effeminate dandy, I rose every morning from my bed, as fatigued from its hardness as from the travels which had sent me to it.

As regards the ear, it is easy to describe how it is affected by the shrill or guttural tones of the ordinary speaking, and the cries which surround you ; by the neuralgic fracas of the carriages ; by the rattle of the circulation of which you form part ; and by the strained attention, by which you endeavour to seize and understand that language, which, though one

may speak it well, has always rebellious accents for the foreigner, and abbreviations, which it is very difficult to follow. All this is fatiguing. I may now speak of the palate.

The habits of the palate are the most imperious, the most powerful, of all over the animal economy, and over the thoughts which are so intimately connected with the digestive organs. Your diet is suddenly changed; your customs are thrust aside; your hygeian system is modified. Heavy and rich meats, nourishing and intoxicating beer, and oceans of tea, all tend to heaviness, fatness, and stupefaction; and exact so vigorous an action of the viscera, that the mind, already strained by the divers influences I have enumerated, ceases to understand, and hardly knows whether or not it exists. I shall be told that it is possible to make arrangements to live according to one's native customs, instead of feeding *à l'Anglaise*. I have often tried this, and I declare that it is not easy, except for sedentary people. Even the wines, that one may substitute for the heavy beers which intoxicate before the thirst is drowned, are sophisticated with alcohol to suit the English palate. Add to all this, the universal custom of mixing condiments with everything, as spices, peppers, and the fire of Cayenne, and think what a stranger becomes, if he does not invent a complete arsenal of precautions.

I do not, however, intend all this as an attack upon the régime of the English. The habits of a people grow out of the circumstances by which they are surrounded. The climate demands this kind of *living*. Only we, who are otherwise environed, are

quite disorientalised by such a régime. We should, no doubt, become accustomed to it, were we to live, for some time, in England. But to the passing traveller, who has to dress himself in June, as he would in France, for November, we may even say December, it is trying work. I went to the Opera, in June, and there saw the soldiers, grouped about a huge fire piled up in a stove. This day, at noon, the hour when the June sun is at its zenith in continental heavens, I am here, writing these lines sorrowfully, to the whistling of the wind through the trees of the square;—of the rain pattering against my windows;—and in a room which makes me shiver. Be gay! It is only a ridiculous dignity which prevents me from asking for a fire. Let us, however, like Hamlet, plunge resolutely into the abomination of desolation. I have bought a pair of boots with gutta-percha soles, and I walk, as upon stakes, that I may sally forth and describe London on this wintry day of June. I have already declared to England that I admire her strength, her industry, her riches, her perseverance, many of her laws. I have therefore earned the right, in the capacity of a frank and independent tourist, to state exactly my opinion of her climate, and of not a few other things which I find intolerable.

It rains: it blows: the streets are marshes, and everybody is at home reading Tomson's Seasons. O! perfidious sky of perfidious Albion! I go out with my cloak over my nose, and my hat over my eyes: I return home frozen to the bones. I forget my dignity and demand fire. I go to bed, and write.

Here is the aspect of London at Midsummer. My

quarter is a fashionable quarter. The narrow and black houses on either side of the streets are protected, like tombs, by iron railings. The names upon the doors appear to me to be epitaphs. All the time I was out, the wind blew the rain in my face :—really, to undertake such an excursion, a man should be a sailor or soldier. I wished to see the fashionable quarter; the fashionable shops; Regent Street! Not a cab in it! There were a few carriages deep in the Macadam. Here and there might be seen the long face of a tradesman, who could not sell his parasols! Here were two ladies struggling with an umbrella which the wind had blown inside out, and holding up their dresses, while their underclothes were left to trail along the mud: this is not pretty. I arrived at the end of this London, Rue de la Paix, and confessed that one would be better anywhere else. Chance led me opposite the tomb and coffin merchant who had had the English idea of planting his shop in the midst of this, the most fashionable quarter of London, between a dressmaker's shop, gay with ribands, and a jeweller's, sparkling with gems and gold. I approached and saw an Englishman dressed in black, engraving an epitaph (I swear by Styx, that I am not inventing).

It relates to some general officer. In the middle of the shop stands a "very desirable" (this is said of everything here) oak coffin, with silver mountings, which another gentleman in black is lining with a white material.

I rushed away, fearing they might want a damp author to fill it. A cab passed; I got into it, and reached home for three shillings. I was so sad that

I could not even—Tush! here is my room full of stinking, dark smoke! What a wind! Let us breakfast. Let us drink a few glasses of claret. It is done. The claret gives me the ghost of an idea. What if, instead of a tempestuous journey to Richmond, I were to content myself with a journey round my room! I might gather some traits of local manners. In the absence of better employment, let me try.

I occupy, for two pounds (fifty francs) a week, two rooms on the first floor. Seven francs a day, without including linen, cleaning, *fire* and lights;—all the accessories being scrupulously reckoned, even to a lucifer or a tooth-pick. Although in the most fashionable quarter of London, Wimpole Street, between Regent Street, Oxford Street, and the parks, these rooms open upon a little garden, crammed full of those plants which thrive in a humid climate. At the street-door there are a knocker and a bell, as there are everywhere. The tradesmen and servants ring: people of rank give seven or eight knocks, and ring at the same time. Much time is lost in London waiting at doors, the servants having to ascend from the cavernous kitchens, with a majestic slowness, to open them. Door-keepers, and the consequently ready door strings are unknown, each house having seldom more than one tenant. You enter. The house, which has rarely more than two or three windows in front, leaves only a narrow space for the staircase. This staircase is nearly always wooden, and creaks under your tread. A band of carpet, or sometimes of oil-cloth, covers the stairs. The walls are either painted or papered with a marble pattern; coloured blinds fall before the

windows: this is neat—quasi-elegant. I enter my sitting-room. A carpet covers the floor all the year round: but a heap of bits of oil-cloth, scraps of carpet, &c., almost hide the original carpet, which has done its work. Upon the walls is an English paper, of French design, which was at the Exhibition, and the sample of which has dazzled my eyes in the shop-window of a Boulevard tradesman. A friend, wishing to ornament the bare walls of my salon for me, sent me a few pictures of hunts, dogs, and horses. My landlady made a cry of horror at the idea that nails were to be driven through her paper; and arranged my artistic presents round the room, upon chairs, with quite a natural manner. This explained to me the habit I had often before remarked in various houses, of distributing the pictures in this way. I had attributed this distribution to a want of the necessary energy for hanging them. But I find that neither for Rubens, nor Lawrence, would a nail be driven through paper purchasable at two shillings the piece!

An immense table, covered by an immense cloth, and bordered with immense fringe, takes up an immense space in the room. I lift up the cloth and find that the table, which is as thick as a bridge, is supported by legs which might serve as columns to a peristyle. This cannot be a table, it is an entresol! My papers and books are spread easily upon it: even the vast breakfast plateau is placed upon it without disturbing anything, and leaving still around, vast steppes of desert. This table, fossilised, will give to future ages a colossal idea of the furnishing race of our age: it is the mountain of tables.

A long and very massive sofa, covered with a coloured stuff which is either faded or has been covered under the action of the carboniferous atmosphere, stretches along one of the sides of the room, between the arm-chairs, upon which two of the pictures have been placed to give them a little height. This sofa is hard, and has a recalcitrant shape ;—which points are not engaging. It is moreover, flat. One wonders whether it is here that the provision of coal is kept. A few chairs, so massive that two hands are required to move them, are disseminated here and there. But the object which has always excited my curiosity, since my arrival, occupies the principal space of the salon, opposite the high and wide window which, appearing to close like a sash, or with a bolt, locks ! There's an idea !

This object is a piece of furniture in ebony, or other dark island wood. It deserves a description. Imagine two square towers, at some distance from one another, joined together by a platform or terrace. Each tower has two stories. On the lower one, or ground floor, a door opens upon the interior. The key of the door is not here, so I can only suppose that there is a stair-case within. The carpet is so carefully cut round it, that there must surely be cellars underneath it. The first story of the two towers exhibits two spaces, say two chambers, opening upon the platform which is bordered by a massive sculptured balcony. This platform covers a broad superficial space extending to the opposite tower ; a space which might be called a drawer, were it not for its Babylonian proportions. The towers have, however, two stories. The upper story is reached by lowering a panel fixed

upon hinges, like a *pont-levis*, leading to nothing. Above all there is a flat surface, a terrace—the view from which must be superb. I did not ask the use to which this edifice was devoted; it might have been either a fortress or an organ. Perhaps the platform serves as a visitor's bed. If we were all as tall as Polyphemus, I should say it was an ugly sideboard, an incommodious buffet for a Cyclopean dining-room. But in the existing state of things, I do not see what can be done with it—except as a barricade.

To conclude my description, which is applicable to many second-rate London houses—bounded on the north by this monument, on the south by the window with lock and key; encumbered in the centre by the table; I have doors on the east, and the fireplace on the west.

At the fireplace, as everywhere else, all is colossal. Do you want to roast an ox?—come to me. The grate is so large that, for the cold of June, I have had some trouble in making *a little* fire. It requires no little effort to lift either the shovel or tongs. A broad low glass is upon the mantel-piece, but this is so high that I can see the reflection of my eye-brows only; and a little iron gallery, ornamented with ferocious points, guards the grate—as without, railings protect the house. Two enormous bell-ropes—the cockades of which would cover the bottom of your hat—complete this formidable furniture, in the midst of which a man appears as a Lilliputian! I refrain from a description of my bed-room; but will remark that the object which should here have been the principal one is, by contradiction, very narrow and hard—

like a berth on board a ship. The mattress has about as much elasticity as a bed of sea-biscuits.

And now I may show how the people who enjoy the widest political freedom are the slaves of their customs and prejudices. Let me also correct an error of French vaudevilles (and are there any other vaudevilles?) which attribute to the English the frequent use of the exclamation "*Goddem*." *Goddem* is fossil. In the present time, the popular exclamation expressing surprise or discontent is, "Ho! ho!" The second "ho" is a tone lower than the first. But the two words which are heard every minute are *box* and *etiquette*. Everything is *box*—nothing is *etiquette*. Here are examples :—

A horse's place in his stable—*box*; a trunk—*box*; Christmas presents—*box*; garden edging—*box*; an opera *box*; the salt-*box*; a traveller's luggage-*box*; the seat upon a carriage—*box*; the pepper-*box*; a hunting-seat—*box*, *shooting-box*; a blow upon the ear—*box* on the ear; a snuff-*box*;—box for everything and everywhere, without counting *boxing*.*

In England everything is "*shoking*." Nothing is *etiquette*. It is not *etiquette* to use a handkerchief—to spit—to sneeze. What is to be done? Is it *etiquette* to have a cold? It is not *etiquette* to speak loud, even in the houses of parliament; to walk in the middle of the street; to run in order to escape the wheel of a carriage. Prefer to be run over! It is not *etiquette* to close a letter with a wafer, because this is to send people your saliva; nor to write

* Note by Editor—Is not this little bit of observation from Matthews' Entertainments?

without an envelope. It is not etiquette to go to the opera with the smallest sprig upon the waistcoat or the cravat; to take soup twice; to salute a lady first; to ride in an omnibus; to go to a party before ten or eleven o'clock, or to a ball before midnight; to drink beer at table without giving back your glass at once to the servant. It is not etiquette to refrain a day from shaving; to have an appetite; to offer anything to drink to a person of high rank; to appear surprised when the ladies leave the table at dessert time—that hour which is so charming with us. It is not etiquette to dress in black in the morning, nor in colours in the evening.

It is not etiquette to address a lady without adding her Christian name. To speak to a person, on any pretext, without having been presented; to knock at a door quietly; to have the smallest particle of mud upon the boot, even in the most unfavourable weather; to have pence in your pocket; to wear the hair cut close; to have a white hat; to exhibit a decoration or two; to wear braces, or a small or large beard—to do any of these things is to forget etiquette. But that which violates etiquette in England more than anything else is—want of money. Ruin yourself—run into debt—nobody will mind this; but, above all, be a spendthrift. If, when a foreigner arrives in London, it becomes known that he lodges in one of the economical hotels near Leicester Square, he is lost to certain society. Never will an equipage, nor even the card of a lord, wander thither. The respectability for which the English contend means simply material advantages—it has no relation to moral qualities.

In France worship is paid to mind—to talent—to

genius ; in Italy and Spain it is paid to pleasure ; in other places to ambition and glory ; in England gold is the presiding deity ! As the middle class always envies the upper class, the commercial people spend considerable sums of money in endeavours to rival the ostentation of the aristocracy.

It is related that Lucien Buonaparte fixed himself in England for the purpose of living economically ; but he soon found out that it was not "respectable" for him to be simple ; and in spite of his economic tendencies, he found himself obliged to court his ruin out of consideration for the memory of the Emperor. The Emperor of Russia—sorry to see his subjects embarrass themselves by their visits to London—resolved to strike a blow at the prejudice which insists that a man must spend freely if he wishes to obtain consideration. The Czar visited the monuments of London in a hackney-coach—*shoking* ! The emotion was great, but the lesson was misunderstood. All that the Emperor gained, was an occasional offhand reception from the custodians of the monuments. It is this love of appearances which spreads over the town, to the eyes of the foreigner, so many anomalies. Thus all people appear to be above their business, and to serve you with the air of doing you a favour. It was this air of dignity which prevented me from striking a bargain with my landlord for an apartment, in which I am crushed by its angles no less than by its heavy rent.

The consumption of black coats, the badge of respectability, must be immense in England. People prefer a second-hand black coat to a new blouse. In short, the history of an English black coat would be

at once comic and philosophic. The story should open at the establishment in Regent Street, upon the shoulders of some Lord Pembroke, who has just paid seven or eight pounds for it. A fortnight afterwards it would turn up in the possession of the lord's valet; afterwards it would appear as the property of a city clerk, or a second-hand dandy; and then flitting from back to back, lengthened here, shortened there, and descending the social scale always, as it lost its buttons and gained occasional holes, it would make its final appearance upon the back of the poor wretch who sweeps a crossing, past which prance the horses of the lord who first wore it! The poor coat, sold at last for three shillings, is cut up to serve the housemaids to scrub their kitchens, and even afterwards will be thrown into a machine, to be worked up once more. The fate of the coat is also that of the dress. The story of the dress and bonnet of my lady, begins in the drawing-room to end in the gutter.

We foreigners are always shocked to see English servants, upon their knees, cleaning the doorsteps; their head covered with a bonnet that was once velvet, but is now of an indescribable material. One may remark upon it sometimes, certain ruins, which, if analysed, might be found to be wrecks of feathers, or lace, or flowers. Does this cook, who goes to market in that old, worn-out, greasy shawl, imagine that she will be mistaken for her mistress going to market to buy her own butter and vegetables, in order to distract her mind from the dull routine of the park and the opera? What self-esteem is there under this rag!

With us, where revolutions have weakened the

prestige by which the superior classes governed the people, each person buys a new article of dress according to his rank, or very little above it. Thus, with us, the coat upon the man, and the bonnet upon the woman, would be much ridiculed if worn by ranks to which they do not belong. I believe, too, that the country, in which every individual strives to appear more than he really is,—where the aristocracy exercises that influence which created, and has perpetuated, these customs,—is still far from those social developments that, as with us, tend to equalise all. The people envy the aristocracy, good ; but they also admire and respect them.

I now approach the question of English ladies. I had opportunities of remarking them, in crowds, at the Great Exhibition of 1851. My first observation was—what becomes of the young women in England ? I saw only young girls and old women ! The truth is, the young girl, generally pretty here—modifies (I had nearly written mummifies) herself at once, either into the despairing old maid, or the laborious mother. She either withers alone, or becomes deformed, after a few years of marriage. It is well known that the English of all classes have a great many children. To have four, is to have a small family. I know families who muster fourteen, and all is not yet over. I have been told of a family of twenty-two. As to the English woman of forty, she is no longer regarded as a woman—in that point of view from which the French woman at this age makes such dreadful ravages ! At this serious age—when the continental woman derives dignity from a little *embonpoint*, when the flowing

lines preserve the face from wrinkles, when the summer yet shines for them in the brilliant days of the Saint Martin—at this age of experience, when a little art knows how to make the best of the fine fruit which has succeeded the flower, the English woman is of a neutral sex. But let us be just to these old ladies; they own, very philosophically, that they are beaten, and out of the lists. They do not seek to gain a look from men by their toilette, as with us. Just as the young English girl is extravagant in her dress, the elderly lady covers herself in sombre colours, which appear to be the winding-sheet of her expired youth. Let us leave this effaced creature, who quits the world by the door of marriage, which, with us, is the entrance to it. Let us quit the woman who disappears from the world to be a mother.

It is with the young girls we shall find that variety of toilette which we miss in the mummified state of the matrons. What shocking gaudy colours! green ribbons upon blue bonnets—yellow dresses and red shawls! And what crinoline, too, underneath! A young English girl occupies three times the circumference which suffices for a man in his black clothes. But how often they are pretty—and always happy! They are white and blonde, and seem to see everything rose-colour. Shakspeare and Byron have admirably described their Creole nonchalance—their smiles discovering white enamel—their voice more musical even than their organisation—and their snowy shoulders upon which the eye fears to see wings develope themselves to bear them to seraphic heights. But, by Falstaff, neither Byron nor Shakspeare have mentioned their appetite!

One day I formed part of a group under the green oaks (qy. elms?) of the transept of the Exhibition. We had finished our examination of India and Turkey. Nothing, it appears, provokes the appetite more than admiration. A young miss declared that she wanted something sustaining. We were near one of the gigantic buffets, the proprietors of which were making enormous fortunes by sustaining the blonde "misses."

I offered to accompany the failing islander. English custom allows this liberty in the case of unmarried ladies; a liberty which, with us, is only permitted with married ladies. We arrived before the counter. "What can the bird find here to put into its little beak!" I exclaimed to myself, as I looked upon the massive cakes, the plum-puddings, and all the "plombs" cut into slices, and piled up in the shape of pyramids,—appearing at once so nourishing and so indigestible, that even a look at them made one feel stuffed. Well, the little bird ate six shillings' worth! Even now I cannot abstain from wondering where she put all this. Not to humiliate her, I endeavoured to gnaw a sort of brick pointed with currants, of which she had already cleared a wall. At the third mouthful, I felt so satisfied that I was compelled to put the rest secretly into my pocket. As for the young white and red Miss, I escorted her back to her parents, in a state, I can assure you, to wait for her dinner.

To return to the domestic habits of the English, it may be stated that this home existence, which requires nothing from without, has real sweetness and incontest-

able dignity in it. It may be easily understood how, in this country, woman leaves the world when she marries. In no other country is woman more exclusively wife and mother than in England. I have already stated, and I now seriously repeat the statement, that the woman between twenty-five and forty does not exist in England—in a social point of view. The contrary is the custom in France, where the young girl (so free over there)—is overlooked, and held back till she marries, when she takes her place in society, and enjoys all the liberty which our manners, and husbands, allow. In England a young girl goes out alone, or with a gentleman; with us—not. In France, a married woman may walk out with a gentleman, or alone; in England—not. The woman between twenty-five and forty, who, in France, reigns everywhere; who leads the fashions; gives the ton; fills and adorns the boxes at theatres and concerts; goes to the sea-side; gives soirées; dances and waltzes; rides; swims; sings in society, and stirs it: this woman, in short, who commits so many ravages in our manners; who creates passions; who ruins her husband by her extravagance, or helps him with her influence; this woman, I repeat, who is the pivot, the *éclat* of our social life, is seen in England only amongst the nobility. The middle classes present to you only young girls who are seeking for a husband, and wives who have completed the duties of maternity. These, having passed the fifteen or twenty brilliant years of their life in the obscurity of their home, come back into the world, timid and ill-informed, without taste for its pleasures. They

seldom assert themselves—appearing to feel that it is too late.

It may be easily understood that where the woman of society is wanting, the wife and mother reign. Her enormous number of children absorbs her attention and develops her domestic qualities. I do not hesitate to attribute the beauty and strength of English children, in a great measure, to the solicitude and care with which this home life surrounds their infancy.

The husbands, of course, do not endeavour to modify or change a state of things which affords them conjugal security. The man to whom travel has opened no new mental horizons ; who has seen nothing ; who has felt nothing beyond the calm and monotonous enjoyment of this domestic life, buries himself in it naturally every evening ; and remains therein until city business calls him away on the morrow morning.

A young girl who has a remarkable mind, who has distinguished taste, has infinitely less chance of marrying, among the positive classes, than the young lady whose qualities develop themselves exclusively in puddings and tea. If the former read two or three languages ; if she practise some art ; if she talk of literature and travels, commercial men are afraid of her, and the chances are, that if she have not a large fortune to counterbalance these disadvantages, they will earn for her a perpetual celibacy. Her disaster will be the result of aspirations and tastes which would have charmed the life of a man who could understand them. More, mothers, persuaded that people who

think much, marry less easily, will be afraid to allow their daughters to associate with her.

These mothers do not seek the most amiable, the most learned men, for sons-in-law; no, their court is paid to the rich. Even the man of fashion is often repulsed as a suitor for the young hearts which are to be chained with gold. The novels of *Mistress Gore* describe the stratagems which mothers use to catch rich husbands for their daughters. Thus society is encumbered with nonentities who are flattered for their wealth, and whose taste for hunting, dogs, and horses, leads the conversation. Judge of the place which letters, poetry, fine arts, and the refined pleasures of intelligent people can obtain, in a society thus absorbed by positive considerations. I will now turn from the domesticity of the English, to state one or two notable points of experience.

There are really only three things which are cheap in London, viz., flannel, crockery, and lobsters. Flannel includes all woollen goods; we may add cotton also to the list. To the lobsters, I think I may, by association of colour, add oranges. Oranges in this foggy country? Yes; the sea, which produces crabs, bears vessels laden with this fruit!

In England, when people are not drinking beer, they drench themselves with tea, and swim in the Chinese pleasure it produces, to facilitate the digestion of so much beef. Tea, therefore, is no longer a medicament for these blasés stomachs. The remedy for all this is—brandy!

You have a headache—brandy, not upon the temples, but down the throat a stomach-ache?—

brandy, not upon the stomach, but in it; a heart-burn?—brandy; tooth-ache?—an excellent opportunity to drink brandy; rheumatism?—brandy; cut, scratch, and contusions, etc.?—brandy; everywhere, and for everything—brandy: applied always internally, with resignation—people must be cured.

The curious adventures of an ex-Lord Mayor of London, called Wattington, have been related to me. As a boy, he was one of the people, and worked in a certain city warehouse. One day he is dismissed for some juvenile misdeed. He demands his cat: it is given up to him. He leaves the city, carrying Pussy with him. Meeting an old Irish fortune-teller, she tells him, after the fashion of the Anabaptists to John of Leyden—"Look at yonder city; you will be thrice Lord Mayor thereof!"

Wattington went his way. He presently embarked in a ship as cabin-boy, carrying his cat with him. The ship touched at an island that was overrun with rats. Here he made up his mind to part with his cat, and sold it to the inhabitants for a large sum. Returned to London with the money, he bought a cargo of cats, and carried them to the infested island. He became rich, and twenty years later was Lord Mayor of London. He was re-elected a second time. Let people now venture to assert that every thing may not be gained with money and prudence. I will answer, "It was the cat!"

I have already asserted that all English ideas are material—positive. All things are massive, heavy, exaggerated. It is a nation, I repeat, of coal and iron, which produce steam strong enough to overthrow the

world. The exaggeration which I have already noticed, is distinguishable in the charlatanism which pervades the shop signs and the advertisements, and in the means adopted to obtain publicity. There is nothing more amusing than the advertisement columns of the "Times;" they pander to the instincts of the public. An hotel-keeper announces that he conducts "*a substantial family-house*"—a house where families are treated substantially. The most unexpected epithets are used to create a desire, or sharpen curiosity: "*a very desirable house to let*"—that is to say, that people who have once seen it cannot resist a wish to occupy it. Every thing is *very valuable, very capital, most seducing*,—and all this is put forth in enormous letters. Stout, a strong beer, is declared upon every wall to be *celebrated*; and my razor-strop pretends to be, as large gold letters upon its case declare, "*inimitable!*"

Thus in everything, and everywhere, you must strike the imagination or the reason hard. I hear charming things in the theatres which pass unseen, because they are delicate, as the fable of *Les Deux Pigeons*, in *Adrienne Lecouvreur*, and all the mots, finely touched, by *Rachel*. While she plays, the majority of the audience read the piece, instead of looking at the actress—and an actress whose physiognomy and gesture deserve the attention paid to an extreme and intelligent pleasure. But here is always the idea of the positive—the desire to know the substance of the matter, without regard to the *form*. I have noticed the same thing in regard to *concerts given in England by foreigners*; for *England*

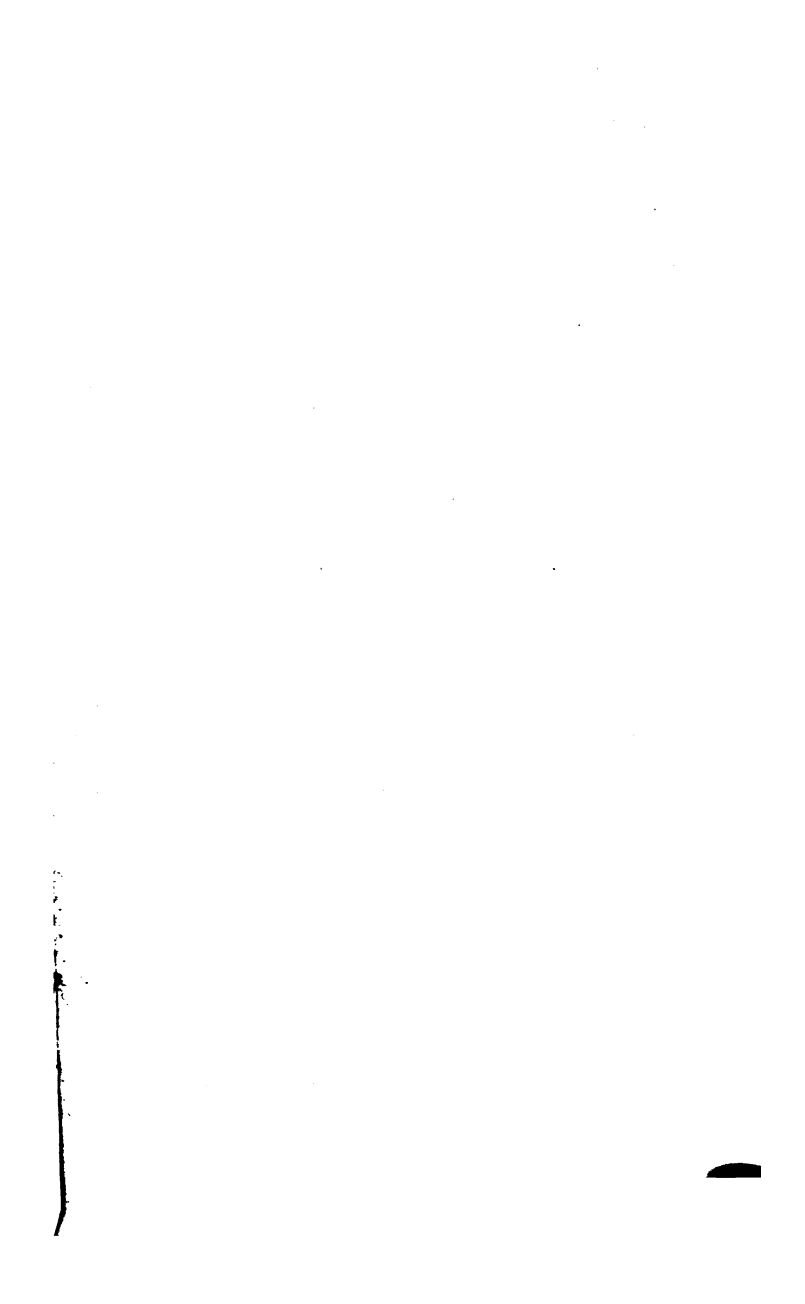
herself has neither singers nor chorographs. Lately the adagio of the air of *Norma*, *Casta Diva*, sung perfectly, did not awaken any applause. Presently a loud noise, and a throwing about of arms came, strong and easy things to bawl, and the theatre was in commotion. Here my idea returns to me, as in everything, as applicable to this positive people.

But it is precisely this positiveness which constitutes English strength and influence. These faults, from our point of view,—we, who are people of subtle sensations, who do not require to be struck hard to vibrate,—rule with the English. Coal and iron—positivism—make this the governing nation of the globe. I repeat it, we have the form—they have the substance. We are ingenious in trifles, delicate, refined, full of taste, light, taken with words, excited with froth, turning to all the phases of pleasure, of caprice, and of inconsequences, for which we pay dear. We make revolutions for a change, without knowing whether we shall gain any advantage,—and we often lose. We mock at our laws—we mock at everything. The Englishman, who laughs but little, respects that strength which he puts in everything. English faults and contradictions, so amusing when contemplated in individuals, in the current of daily life, form, when applied to a collection of men united as a nation, that which gives greatness to a state, and its preponderance in the world.

Our *esprit*, our fertility, are charming gifts, by which we lose—with grace! The positivism of this beef-eating people, who do not understand a prolonged sound, fill themselves with beer, make everything of

iron, doctor themselves with as much brandy as it is possible to consume,—this positivism has given them one hundred and twenty millions of subjects upon the globe!

THE END.



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